BRITAIN'S BEST MILITARY HISTORY MAGAZINE

HISTORY of WAR

JAGDPANZER 38
Inside Hitler's tank hunter

ROAD TO WATERLOO
QUATRE BRAS

- British infantry squares take on cuirassiers
- Ligny: Napoleon's final victory
- How Wellington's tactical triumph sealed French defeat

VICHY FRANCE
Uncover Pétain's war against the Allies

FUTURE
ISSUE 097

SPARTA DEBUNKED
Why the Greek warriors were not so great

KING & COUNTRY

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Resistance & Revenge

During the summer and autumn of 1944 as Allied forces liberated more villages and towns across France a violent wave of revenge and retribution swept across the country often led and directed by vengeful members of the resistance... *Les Maquisards.*

Among the first victims of this savage purge were anyone suspected or accused of working with the hated *'Boche' (the Germans)* or supplying them and their *'Vichy French'* collaborators with information.

Also included were thousands of women of all ages who had romantic or *'professional'* liaisons with the German occupiers.

CRIME & PUNISHMENT

Many of these women were publicly dragged through the streets to a village or town square and then had their heads shaved before being daubed with swastikas and driven out from their homes... all in front of jeering neighbours.

For male collaborators the punishment could be even more extreme... A physical beating might be followed by execution by shooting or hanging.

After four long years of living through often brutal repression with many hardships, and humiliations there was no shortage of *'old scores'* to be settled with those who were seen to have benefited from their association with the enemy.

TELLING THE STORY

This first unique batch of *King & Country* figures captures a dramatic and controversial time in French history and an important part of the *'Liberation'* and the events that followed it.

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For additional details about these special *King & Country* figures or K&C's many other historical series of *1:30 scale, all-metal, hand-painted miniatures* simply contact Britain's biggest and most extensive K&C Dealer...

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Above: The Battle of Quatre Bras was pivotal to Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo two days later

Welcome

The Battle of Waterloo has always fascinated me. On 18 June, 1815, thousands of soldiers from across Europe converged on a relatively small patch of farmland to decide what would be the final clash of the Napoleonic Wars. However, as we explore this issue, the outcome may very well have been decided two days earlier, at Quatre Bras and Ligny. These lesser-known but no less crucial engagements saw the Duke of Wellington and Field Marshal Blucher separated by the French, who forced the two allies to retreat, bloodied but undefeated. Several blunders and heroic feats from both sides had huge consequences in the coming decisive battle.

Tim Williamson
Editor-in-Chief

CONTRIBUTORS

ANDREW FIELD, MBE

A former British Army officer turned historian, Andrew has written several books on the Napoleonic Wars, including *Prelude to Waterloo* on the Battle of Quatre Bras. This month he spoke with Tom Gamer on why this battle was so critical to the Waterloo campaign (p24).

WILL IREDALE

During Bomber Command's most daring missions of WWII, a few of the most skilled and bravest aircrews led the way, flying first into enemy airspace. On page 70 historian Will discusses why the Pathfinders were so critical to the RAF's success.

MYKE COLE

A former intelligence officer, Myke has published several historical fiction and non-fiction titles – over on page 38 he debunks five of the biggest myths surrounding the ancient Spartans.

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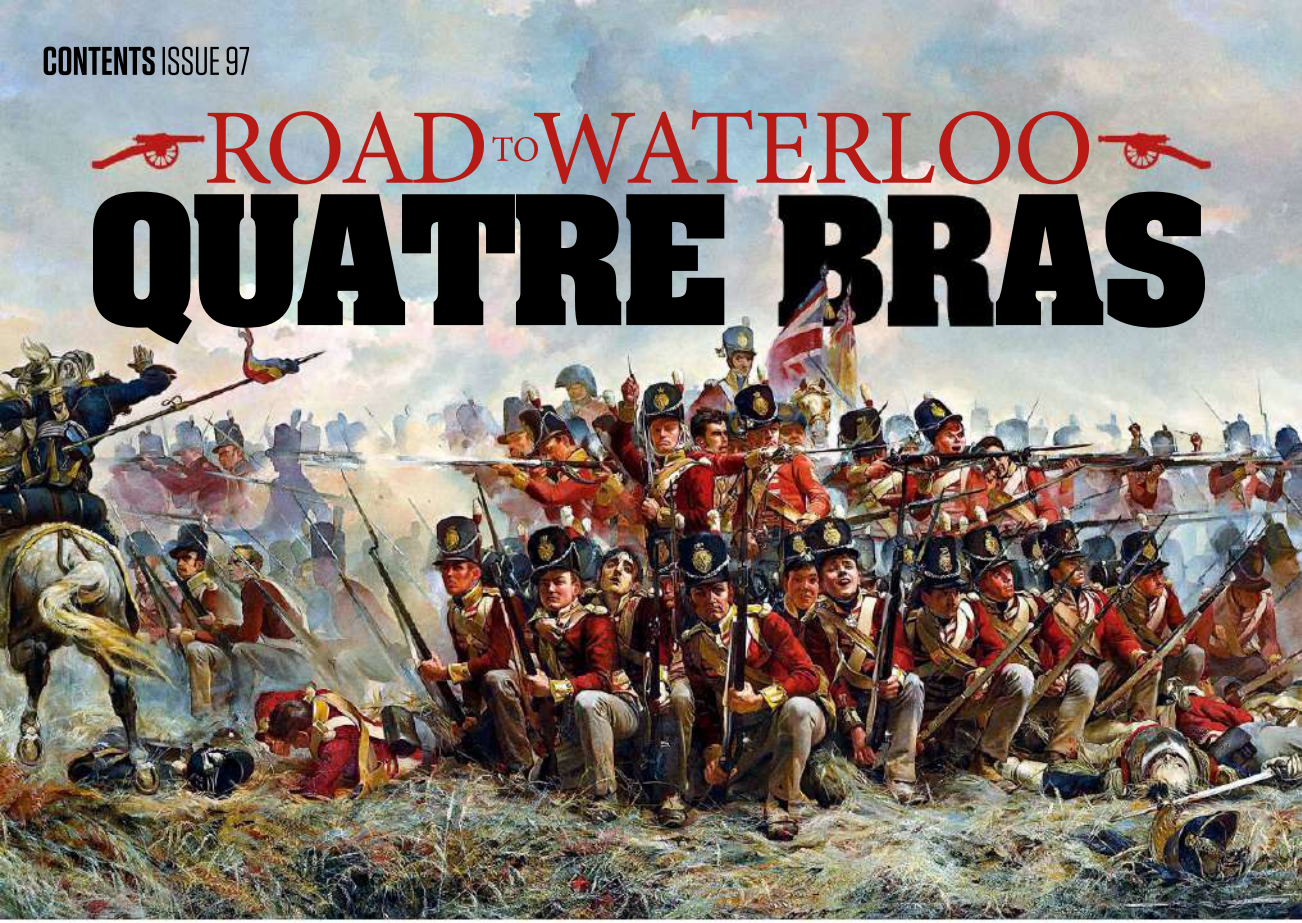
TURN TO PAGE 50

ROAD TO WATERLOO
QUATRE BRAS



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In the final months of the Civil War, Confederate forces in the west were on the brink of destruction

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This famous officer earned the highest honour during the Battle of the Somme

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During the American Civil War, early submarines were used – with often hazardous results

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This lucky mascot travelled from Normandy to Berlin

JAGDPANZER 38

62 Known later as the 'Hetzer' this design was among the most prolific tank hunters of WWII

WAR in FOCUS

ATLANTIC ALLIES

Taken: 10 August 1941

Churchill and President Roosevelt met aboard the HMS Prince of Wales, where they discussed the course of the war and the increase in support from the United States, then still officially neutral. The meeting was followed by a joint statement outlining eight principles of the two nations' intentions both during and after the war. Known as the Atlantic Charter, the statement was not an official treaty or formal alliance – this would take place with the Declaration of the United Nations in January 1942.

© Getty

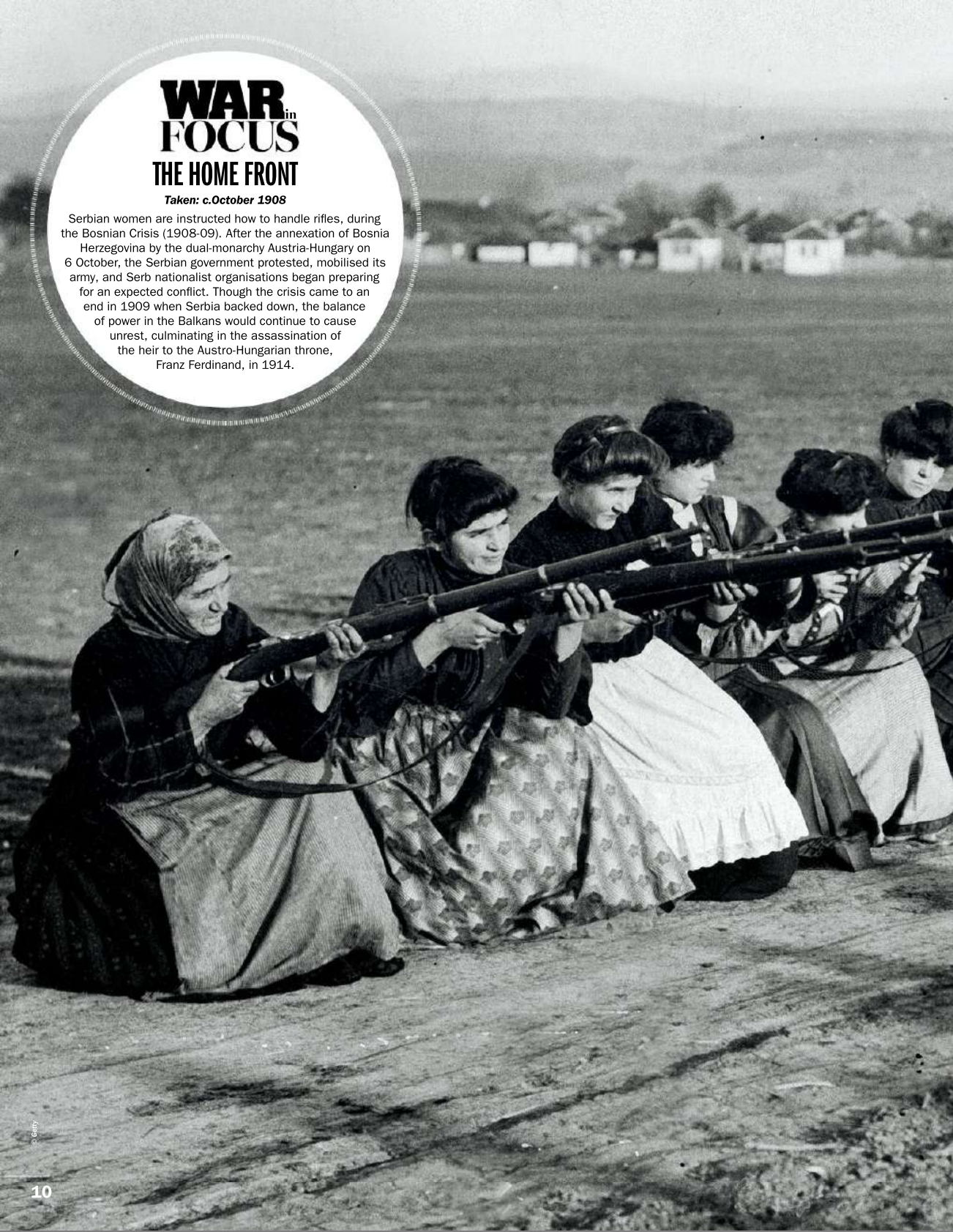
© Getty

WAR in FOCUS

OPERATION BYRD

Taken: c.April 1967

A US soldier gives orders during Operation Byrd, in Bình Thuan province, South Vietnam. The American and South Vietnamese operation aimed to locate and destroy Viet Cong bunkers and supply dumps in the region. Task Force Byrd was made up of the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, and the ARVN (Army of the People's Republic of Vietnam). Initially only intended to last two months, operations continued from August 1966 to December 1967.



WAR in FOCUS

THE HOME FRONT

Taken: c.October 1908

Serbian women are instructed how to handle rifles, during the Bosnian Crisis (1908-09). After the annexation of Bosnia Herzegovina by the dual-monarchy Austria-Hungary on 6 October, the Serbian government protested, mobilised its army, and Serb nationalist organisations began preparing for an expected conflict. Though the crisis came to an end in 1909 when Serbia backed down, the balance of power in the Balkans would continue to cause unrest, culminating in the assassination of the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, Franz Ferdinand, in 1914.

© Getty

TIMELINE OF...

VICHY FRANCE

During WWII, France's pro-German rump state fights Allied forces worldwide, French Resistance at home, and infamously assists the Nazis in implementing the Holocaust

German soldiers parade down the Champs-Élysées following the fall of Paris

© Getty

FALL OF FRANCE

Nazi Germany invades France in a blitzkrieg campaign that quickly defeats the Allies. Hasty military evacuations are conducted on the French coast, Paris is occupied and the government of the Third Republic falls.

10 May – 25 June 1940

ESTABLISHMENT OF VICHY FRANCE 01

France signs an armistice with Germany where the Nazis divide the country into two zones: occupied and unoccupied. The unoccupied zone is located in the south and east of France, with former WWI general Marshal Philippe Pétain governing a new proxy state from the resort town of Vichy.

© Alamy

A Vichy propaganda poster celebrating the pro-German French government of Philippe Pétain

22 June – 10 July 1940

COLLABORATION

The Vichy government voluntarily takes measures against 'undesirables' including Jews, communists, Romani and homosexuals. It actively collaborates with the Nazis in many areas, including the Holocaust. Almost a quarter of France's Jews (c.90,000) die during the war.

Jews pictured being deported from Paris. Approximately 76,000 Jews are deported from France to concentration or extermination camps

© Alamy

1940-44

ATTACK ON MERS EL KÉBIR 02

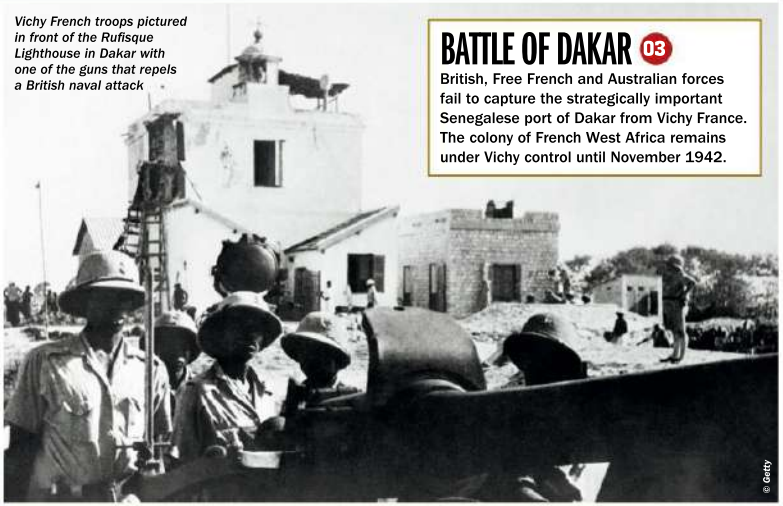
The Royal Navy attacks French naval vessels on the Algerian coast near Oran as part of a British plan to prevent them falling under Nazi control. Almost 1,300 French sailors are killed, one battleship is sunk and five other vessels are damaged. Pétain severs diplomatic ties with Britain and a retaliatory Vichy bombing raid is launched against Gibraltar.

A Vichy propaganda poster proclaims, "Don't forget Oran!"

© Getty

3 July 1940

Vichy French troops pictured in front of the Rufisque Lighthouse in Dakar with one of the guns that repels a British naval attack



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BATTLE OF DAKAR 03

British, Free French and Australian forces fail to capture the strategically important Senegalese port of Dakar from Vichy France. The colony of French West Africa remains under Vichy control until November 1942.

© Getty

SYRIA-LEBANON CAMPAIGN

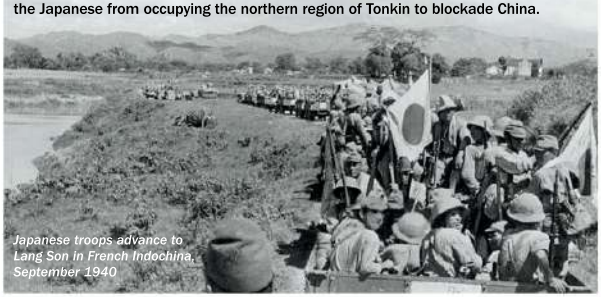
British-led Allied forces invade Vichy French-controlled Syria and Lebanon. Vichy forces vigorously defend these territories but sign an armistice before Australian troops enter Beirut.

Vichy French colonial troops parade through Beirut, 16 June 1941

22-26 September 1940 — **23-25 September 1940** — **27 October – 12 November 1940** — **8 June – 14 July 1941**

INVASION OF FRENCH INDOCHINA

Japan takes advantage of the fall of France by invading French Indochina. French colonies remain under the jurisdiction of Vichy France but Pétain is unable to prevent the Japanese from occupying the northern region of Tonkin to blockade China.



Japanese troops advance to Lang Son in French Indochina, September 1940

© Alamy

BATTLE OF GABON 04

Vichy and Free French forces fight for control of French Equatorial Africa. The Free French capture the colony, including the capital of Libreville. The campaign greatly enhances the military and political credibility of Free France.

Free French forces pictured with their Hotchkiss H35 tanks during the campaign in Gabon

© Alamy

July 1941 – September 1944

EASTERN FRONT COMBAT

Recruits from Vichy France form the Legion of French Volunteers Against Bolshevism to participate alongside Nazi forces in Operation Barbarossa. Thousands of Frenchmen fight on the Eastern Front for three years and suffer heavy losses.

Vichy French troops pictured in Smolensk during Operation Barbarossa, c.1941

5 May – 6 November 1942

BATTLE OF MADAGASCAR

The British launch Operations Ironclad and Stream Line to capture the strategically important island of Madagascar from the Vichy French. The Allied aim is to deny Madagascan ports to the Japanese Navy, and the island eventually comes under Free French control.

Madagascan soldiers undergo a rifle inspection by Vichy French officers

American soldiers pictured in Casablanca, November 1942

© Getty

OPERATION TORCH 05

American-led Allied forces invade Vichy French territories in North Africa. Three-pronged amphibious attacks are launched against Casablanca, Oran and Algiers that result in Allied success. Vichy commander Admiral François Darlan reaches a compromise with the Allies but is assassinated shortly afterwards.

MAQUIS BATTLES 07

French Resistance Maquis fighters engage Nazi troops and Vichy paramilitaries. Rural battles are fought at Glières, Mont Mouchet and Vercors among others in anti-partisan operations. The Maquis are heavily defeated with hundreds dead, including many civilians.

Maquis fighters pictured in Corsica, c.1944

© Getty

LIBERATION OF PARIS 08

The Allied liberation of the French capital establishes a new Provisional Government of the French Republic led by General Charles de Gaulle – the leader of Free France. This signals the death knell of the Vichy regime, which ostensibly governs all of Metropolitan France.

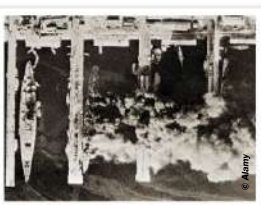
Charles de Gaulle parades down the Champs-Élysées after the liberation of Paris

© Alamy

8-16 November 1942
10-27 December 1942
31 January – 5 August 1944
19 August 1944
6 September 1944 – 22 April 1945

CASE ANTON 06

Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy occupy Vichy France and Corsica after Operation Torch. Vichy forces scuttle the demobilised French fleet at Toulon, while Pétain's regime becomes little more than a puppet government. Nevertheless, Vichy France continues to maintain notional civil authority.



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The scuttling of the French fleet at Toulon results in the destruction of 77 naval vessels and the capture of a further 46

SIGMARINGEN ENCLAVE 09

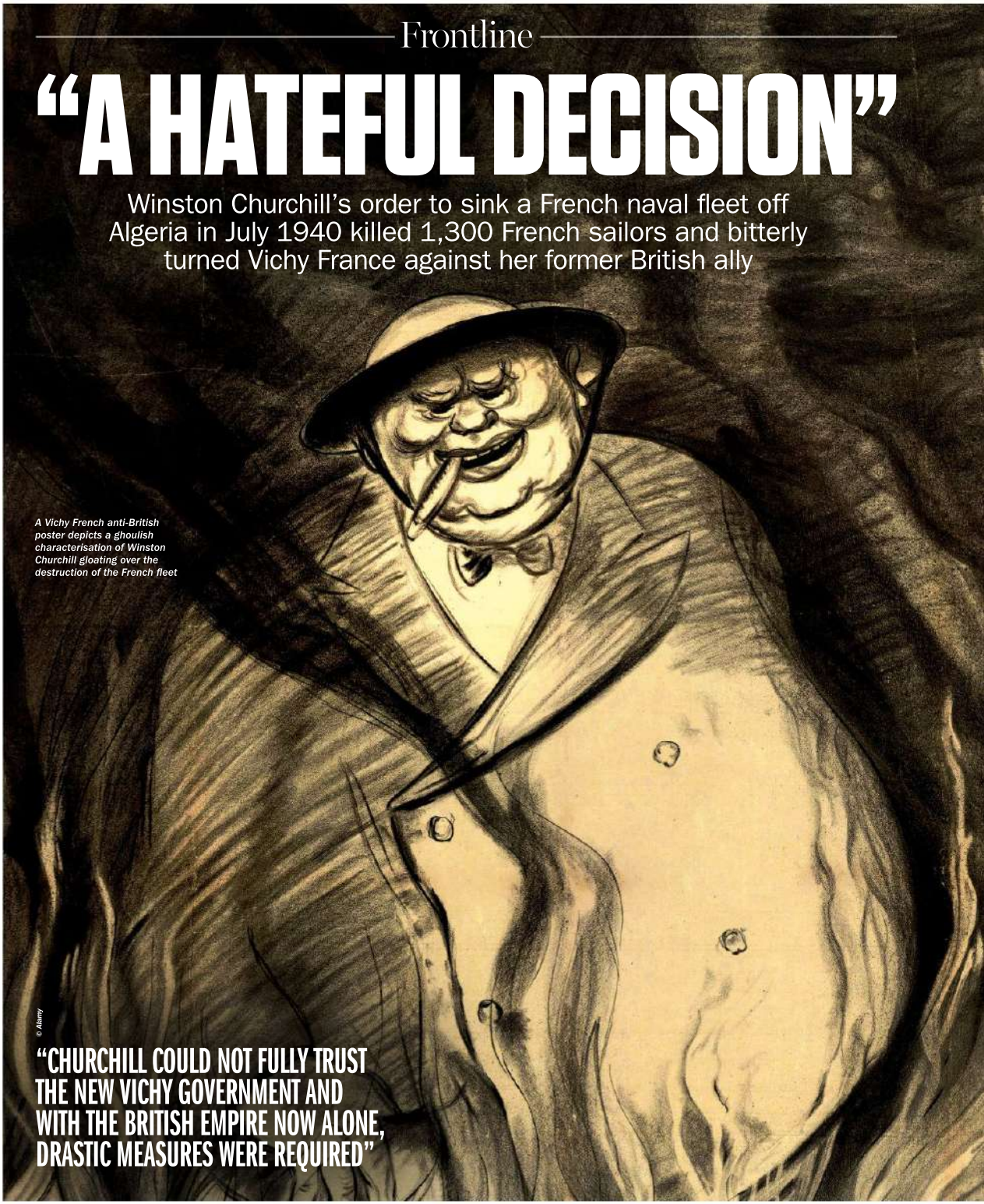
The remnants of the Vichy government flee to Germany after the Allied liberation of France. Their government-in-exile occupies Sigmaringen Castle until it is captured by the French First Army. Most of the Vichy leaders are subsequently arrested for treason, including Pétain.

© Getty

A French soldier draws up a list of French POWs released at Sigmaringen, 23 April 1945

"A HATEFUL DECISION"

Winston Churchill's order to sink a French naval fleet off Algeria in July 1940 killed 1,300 French sailors and bitterly turned Vichy France against her former British ally



A Vichy French anti-British poster depicts a ghoulish characterisation of Winston Churchill gloating over the destruction of the French fleet

© Alamy

"CHURCHILL COULD NOT FULLY TRUST THE NEW VICHY GOVERNMENT AND WITH THE BRITISH EMPIRE NOW ALONE, DRASTIC MEASURES WERE REQUIRED"

The British naval attack on the French fleet at Mers-el-Kébir, Algeria, was one of the most controversial military decisions of Churchill's premiership. A strike against a former ally, Mers-el-Kébir resulted in the deaths of almost 1,300 French sailors and hardened the resolve of the newly established pro-German Vichy regime against Britain.

After the fall of France, the French signed an armistice with Nazi Germany on 22 June 1940. Article 8 stated: "The French fleet… will be demobilised and disarmed under the supervision of Germany or, respectively, Italy. The German government solemnly declares… that it has no intention of using… for its own purposes the French fleet stationed in ports under German supervision."

The British refused to believe that the French Navy would not be commandeered by the Germans. This belief was based on previously broken German promises and their refusal to allow French military personnel to transfer to the UK. The French Navy's commander, Admiral François Darlan, assured the British that the fleet would not come under German control, but he also refused requests to allow his vessels to come under British control or move them to the French West Indies.

With France's Atlantic ports in German hands and the Royal Navy's Mediterranean presence threatened, the British faced a huge dilemma. The French fleet was one of the biggest in the world and could greatly assist the Germans for an invasion of Britain. Churchill could not fully trust the new Vichy government and with the British Empire now alone, drastic measures were required.

Most of the French Navy was scattered among France's African colonies and also at Portsmouth, England. Operation Catapult was launched to put French naval vessels under British control, which was successful in both England and Alexandria, Egypt. However, the most powerful group of French warships was at Mers-el-Kébir near Oran, Algeria. Consisting of battleships, destroyers and dozens of aircraft, this was a powerful force with alarmingly ambiguous allegiances.

The British could not allow the French ships at Mers-el-Kébir to fall into Axis hands; the French Navy were also hamstrung because they could not surrender without orders from the Vichy government. To do so could have been regarded as treason, but on 27 June 1940 the British War Cabinet decided to sink the French fleet if they did not agree to an ultimatum.

Admiral Sir James Somerville led Force H from Gibraltar to Mers-el-Kébir. This consisted of numerically superior battleships, cruisers, destroyers and an aircraft carrier. Somerville was directed by Admiral Sir Dudley Pound: "You are charged with one of the most disagreeable and difficult talks that a British Admiral has ever been faced with, but we have complete confidence in you to carry it out relentlessly."

"Thoroughly ashamed"

Force H hemmed in the French fleet at Mers-el-Kébir, which was commanded by Admiral Marcel-Bruno Gensoul. Somerville sent an initially generously worded but firm ultimatum on 3 July 1940 that began, "It is impossible for us, your comrades up to now, to allow your fine ships to fall into the power of the German enemy. We are determined to fight on until the end, and if we win, as we think we shall, we shall never forget that France was our Ally, that our interests are the same as hers, and that our common enemy is Germany."

Somerville then presented two main options for the French: "(a) Sail with us and continue the fight until victory against the Germans. (b) Sail with reduced crews under our control to a British port." A third option allowed for demilitarisation in the Caribbean, with immediate sinking only being the final resort. The last sentences were ominous: "If you refuse these fair offers, I must with profound regret, require you to sink your ships within six hours. Finally, failing the above, I have orders from His Majesty's Government to use whatever force may be necessary to prevent your ships from falling into German hands."

Negotiations foundered between the conflicted fury of the French high command and the blunt insistence of the British. The talks failed and Churchill ordered the British to commence firing at 5.54pm on 3 July. The attack only lasted for ten minutes but caused huge destruction. The battleship Bretagne exploded while two others – Dunkerque and Provence – were ran aground. A destroyer was severely damaged while just one battleship, Strasbourg, and some escort destroyers escaped to Toulon.

The carnage and the deaths of 1,300 sailors caused Vichy France to cut diplomatic ties with Britain. The attack was universally condemned throughout France and prompted Vichy military retaliation against Gibraltar. Anglo-French relations were damaged for years and hardened Vichy resistance against the British during campaigns across Africa and Asia.

In the aftermath, Somerville despairingly wrote: "We all feel thoroughly ashamed," while Churchill announced the news of the attack to the House of Commons with "sincere sorrow". Conversely, the action demonstrated to the world, and particularly the United States, that Britain was determined to keep fighting the Axis powers at whatever cost. Nevertheless, Churchill later reflected: "This was a hateful decision, the most unnatural and painful in which I have ever been concerned."

The controversy regarding Mers-el-Kébir has continued after Churchill acknowledged that he left the moral "judgement" of the attack "to history". Nevertheless, André Jaffre – a surviving French sailor – attempted to be magnanimous. Speaking in 2010 he said: "It's not betrayal. It was war with all that unfolds. I was deeply saddened that our English friends had sunk us, but what can you do? Let us be honest, have you ever seen an intelligent war?"

French ships pictured under bombardment by the British

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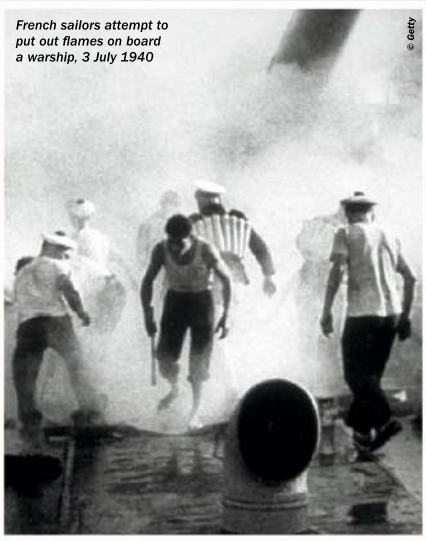


French sailors attempt to put out flames on board a warship, 3 July 1940

© Getty

LEADERS & COMMANDERS

Both the leaders and opponents of Vichy shaped the future of France after World War II

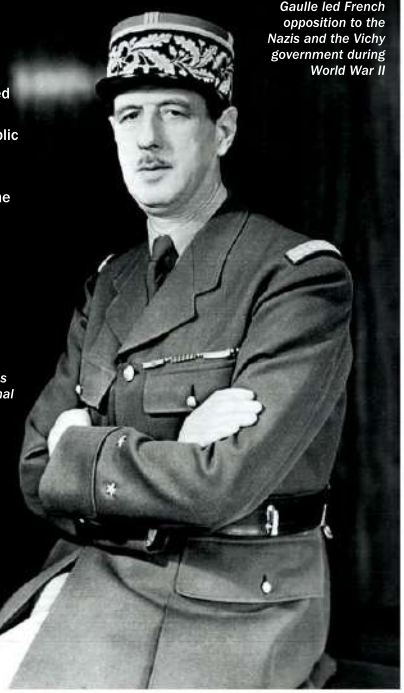
CHARLES DE GAULLE

FREE FRENCH AND NATIONAL LEADER IN THE POST-WAR YEARS 1890-1970

An obscure army officer when World War II broke out, Charles de Gaulle fought the Germans bravely and then chose to flee to Great Britain with the fall of France, establishing himself as the leader of the nation's anti-Nazi movement. He established a somewhat contentious relationship with Allied leaders and sought to preserve the interests of France even though it had been occupied by the Nazis and its puppet Vichy regime was led by his former mentor, Marshal Philippe Pétain.

Estranged from Pétain, de Gaulle was tried in absentia by a Vichy tribunal and sentenced to death. However, his strong leadership and opposition to the Nazis brought support from some quarters in the French military. He raised Free French forces to fight the Germans and became provisional head of the French Republic from June 1944 to October 1946. Famously, he insisted that Allied troops liberate Paris in the summer of 1944 rather than bypassing the capital during the post D-Day advance toward the German frontier.

The foremost French nationalist figure to emerge from World War II, General de Gaulle was elected president of France in 1958 and influenced the country's political scene even beyond his death.



General Charles de Gaulle led French opposition to the Nazis and the Vichy government during World War II

***Left:** General Charles de Gaulle and Marshal Leclerc, 1944*

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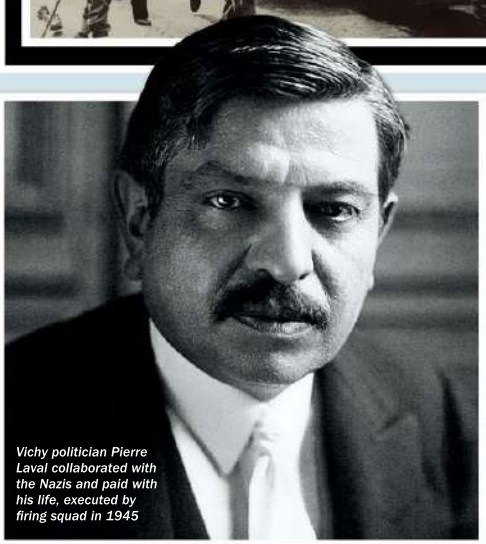

Vichy politician Pierre Laval collaborated with the Nazis and paid with his life, executed by firing squad in 1945

PIERRE LAVAL

NAZI COLLABORATIONIST WHO SANCTIONED VICHY EXCESSES 1883-1945

Although he began his political career as a socialist, Pierre Laval became one of the foremost Nazi collaborators of the Second World War, and his reputation as a Nazi sympathiser is second only to that of Vichy head of state Marshal Philippe Pétain. Laval served in several positions within the Vichy regime, including vice president of the council of ministers and head of the government. He cooperated with Nazi efforts to arrest and deport Jews while also providing forced labourers to work in the Third Reich. Laval had served as French prime minister and held numerous other offices during the 1930s.

Along with Pétain, Laval refused to commit Vichy to war against the Allies, and with the liberation of France in 1944 he was arrested by the Germans. He fled to Spain briefly but returned to France and was taken into custody by the provisional government. He was tried, convicted of treason, and executed by firing squad in October 1945.

"HE COOPERATED WITH NAZI EFFORTS TO ARREST AND DEPORT JEWS WHILE ALSO PROVIDING FORCED LABOURERS TO WORK IN THE THIRD REICH"

CHARLES MAURRAS
AUTHOR AND POLITICAL THEORIST MAURRAS ADVOCATED RIGHT-WING GOVERNMENT 1868-1952

As early as the 1890s, author and political theorist Charles Maurras was a proponent of conservative government. In 1899, he was one of the founders of *L'Action française*, a publication that supported integral nationalism, embodying concepts that the authority of the state was supreme and that the national interests of France were above those of the individual. It opposed the country's ideals of "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" and promoted a national identity based on the slogan "Blood and Soil".

During the early 20th century, Maurras penned numerous works in support of his political theories, some of which were banned by the Roman Catholic Church. During WWII, he became a strong supporter of the Vichy government and produced pro-Vichy writings. Maurras was convicted of "complicity with the enemy" in January 1945 and sentenced to life in prison; he was released in 1952, the year of his death, due to health concerns.

Charles Maurras, the author of pro-Vichy material during World War II, was convicted of complicity with the enemy in 1945

ADMIRAL JEAN FRANCOIS DARLAN
COMMANDER OF VICHY FORCES, DARLAN SIGNED AN ARMISTICE DURING OPERATION TORCH 1881-1942

Admiral Jean François Darlan held numerous posts in the Vichy government, including minister of foreign affairs, minister of the interior, and vice president of the collaborationist council. During Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of North Africa on 8 November 1942, he was commander of all Vichy military forces.

When American and British soldiers came ashore in North Africa, Darlan happened to be in Algiers, visiting his son who was ill. Although some Vichy commanders chose to side with the Allies and cooperated during Torch, others decided to fight. Despite his collaborationist past, Darlan was realistic and understood that Axis forces were on the road to ruin. He signed an armistice that ended the early fighting in Morocco and Algeria, saving many American, British and French lives. However, some criticism was levelled at Allied leaders for concluding a pact with a collaborationist. Darlan was assassinated on 24 December 1942.

***Above:** Admiral François Darlan commanded all Vichy military forces and signed an armistice with the Allies in North Africa*

***Above:** Flandin, prime minister of France 1934-35 and 1940, favoured appeasement of the Nazis prior to WWII*

PIERRE-ÉTIENNE FLANDIN
A CONSERVATIVE, FLANDIN SERVED AS VICHY PRIME MINISTER 1889-1958

Pierre-Étienne Flandin was a conservative politician who served as prime minister of France during the Third Republic from November 1934 to May 1935. Although his tenure was brief, he was the youngest prime minister in the history of France at the time and concluded important agreements with the British, Soviet and Italian governments. Flandin was French foreign minister when Hitler ordered German troops to reoccupy the demilitarised Rhineland and subsequently favoured a policy of appeasement that emboldened the Nazi Führer in his territorial demands prior to the outbreak of World War II. Vichy head of state Philippe Pétain appointed Flandin foreign minister and prime minister in December 1940. However, he served only two months in office before being displaced by Admiral François Darlan.

JOSEPH DARNAND
AN ARMY VETERAN, DARNAND ORGANISED THE VICHY POLICE 1897-1945

A veteran of the Great War, Joseph Darnand became one of the most despised figures in Vichy France. He organised and led the Milice Française, the secret state police and paramilitary force of the collaborationist regime. Although he fought the Germans during the early days of World War II, Darnand founded the Milice, nominally under the control of Pierre Laval, on 1 January 1943.

In August of that year he also accepted a commission in the Waffen-SS and swore an oath of allegiance to Adolf Hitler. Engaging in operations against the French Resistance, he became personally responsible for the deaths and imprisonment of many countrymen. In April 1945 he fled to Italy, where he was captured by British troops. Returned to France, Darnand was convicted of conspiring with the enemies of France and executed by firing squad on 10 October 1945.

Head of the Vichy Milice française, Joseph Darnand was executed by firing squad in October 1945

All images: Wiki / PD / Gov (unless otherwise stated)

HERO & TRAITOR MARSHAL HENRI PHILIPPE PÉTAIN

Marshal Philippe Pétain became a national hero during the Great War, but chose to collaborate with the Nazis during World War II, forming the figurehead of the Vichy regime

"IN THE INTER-WAR PERIOD HE WAS PERHAPS THE BEST-KNOWN SOLDIER IN FRANCE, A NATIONAL HERO"

Marshal Pétain meets Adolf Hitler in October 1940. Nazi Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop looks on at right

Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-H25217 / CC-BY-SA 3.0

On 23 July 1951, Henri Philippe Pétain died in exile on the windswept Île d'Yeu south of the Brittany peninsula. It was an ignominious end for the old warrior, Marshal of France, hero of Verdun and the nation's foremost soldier of the Great War.

During World War II Pétain had become his country's chief collaborationist as France was crushed under the heel of Nazi occupation. At the age of 84, he led a defeatist faction that sought an armistice with the invaders rather than continuing the fight in the spring of 1940. He offered his people "the gift of his person" and pledged to remain in France rather than flee to Great Britain or safety in the colonies of North Africa.

Shame of collaboration

Seeking to preserve what he could for the French people, Pétain cooperated with Adolf Hitler, accepting the post as head of state in the puppet Vichy government just days after an armistice was signed and the humiliation of France was complete. Pétain established an authoritarian state, enacting right-wing laws, and allowing French slave labourers to be shipped off to work in the Third Reich. He sanctioned the repression of French Jews and turned a blind eye as non-French Jews were over time rounded up and deported to concentration camps.

Under Pétain, Vichy France adopted the slogan "Work, Family, Country" and the leader told his people that he sought "national revival". In the spring of 1942, Pétain brought his deputy, Pierre Laval, to the forefront of Vichy politics, and the latter's pro-Nazi stance was unveiled for all to see.

Pétain later reasoned that he had walked a fine line, playing the "double game" of collaboration while hoping to dissuade the Nazis from excesses in France. However, the extent of his cooperation with the occupiers was undeniable, and when he was tried and convicted for treason in the summer of 1945, the sentence was death.

Victory at Verdun

The drama of Pétain's military and political career began in 1876 when, at the age of 20, he joined the French Army. He graduated from the prestigious military academy at Saint-Cyr, ranking 403rd in a class of 412. Prior to World War I he held a succession of postings, but his career was unremarkable.

When war broke out, he was a 58-year-old colonel commanding an infantry brigade. However, his theories on firepower and the use of heavy artillery gained notoriety, and soon regular promotion came – partially because many other officers had sought glory with outmoded tactics, leading their soldiers into the teeth of enemy machine-gun fire and paying with their lives.

Elevated to division, corps and then army command, Pétain came to Verdun in February 1916. In an hour of desperation for France, he stabilised the situation, ordering up heavy guns and deploying them to more favourable positions, and implementing a policy of 'Noria', rotating soldiers from the front on a regular schedule to ensure that fresh troops were available in the trenches. He also visited combat areas to improve soldiers' morale and reassure them that he would not throw their lives away in futile attacks.

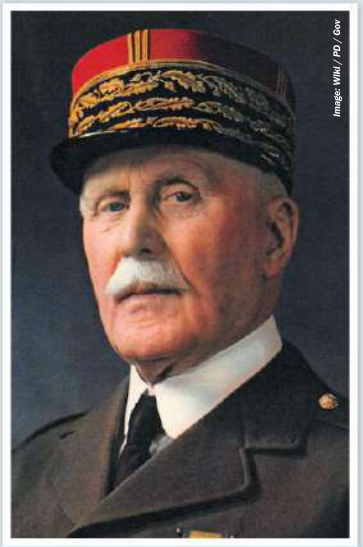

Image: Wiki / PD / Gov

Above: *Marshal Philippe Pétain, hero of Verdun in 1916, led collaborationist Vichy France a generation later during World War II*

Pétain retained command of French forces through to the end of the Great War but was subordinate to Marshal Ferdinand Foch, supreme commander of Allied forces. Nevertheless, in the inter-war period he was perhaps the best-known soldier in France, a national hero. Sometimes criticised as a pessimist, Pétain remained an influential figure as the military prepared to fight the next war. He contributed to the design and location of Maginot Line fortifications and served as minister of war in the 1930s.

As the Germans rolled across France in the spring of 1940, he served as deputy prime minister and then prime minister prior to the establishment of the Vichy regime.

Pathetic postscript

After the war, Pétain faced trial, but asserted that he was not answerable to the tribunal. In uniform, he stated: "The High Court, as constituted, does not represent the French people, and it is to them alone that the Marshal of France, Head of State, will address himself."

The accused spent the rest of the proceedings in silence, and the evidence mounted. When the sentence of death was pronounced, General Charles de Gaulle, de facto leader of post-war France and Pétain's one-time protégé, stepped in to commute the punishment to life in prison. Pétain was stripped of all military honours and ranks except the title of Marshal of France, his great contributions overshadowed by the shame of collaboration.

So it was that the old man descended into senility on the Île d'Yeu, where he died and was buried. His last wish, to be interred with his soldiers who had perished at Verdun, was denied.

OPERATION TORCH

Landing in November 1942, the Western Allies opened a second front, fighting Vichy forces in North Africa

The largest amphibious operation in the history of warfare up to that time, the Allied invasion of North Africa, Operation Torch, was in fact a high-risk gamble.

Soviet leader Joseph Stalin had clamoured for a second front to ease the pressure on his Red Army in the East, but the under-strength Western Allies weren't capable of launching an invasion of France in 1942. Instead, Prime Minister Winston Churchill and President Franklin D Roosevelt settled on French North Africa for their first ambitious military undertaking.

Tactical wild card

While contemplating the invasion, Allied military commanders were painfully aware that there were divided loyalties among French soldiers and sailors who served throughout the nation's colonial empire, particularly in North Africa. Would Vichy forces fight the Allied troops landing at Casablanca in Morocco and Algiers and Oran in Algeria, or would they capitulate? Previously, in Syria and at Dakar, they had chosen to fight.

A wave of intrigue swept through the days prior to the Torch landings as secret negotiations took place between Allied and Vichy leaders. Robert Murphy, President Roosevelt's trusted diplomatic liaison in North Africa, quietly solicited cooperation from Vichy officers. General Mark Clark, deputy commander of Allied forces in the Mediterranean, risked his life on a mission to obtain assurances from French officers that they would not oppose the landings. Clark boarded the British submarine Seraph, coming ashore west of Algiers and informing General Charles Mast, commander of local Vichy forces, that the invasion was imminent. Mast agreed to cooperate.

American soldiers hit the beach near Algiers during Operation Torch

Still, on the eve of Operation Torch, the situation remained unclear.

The invasion begins

Just after 1am on 8 November 1942, Allied forces began landing in North Africa. Loudspeakers squawked in French: "Don't shoot! We are your friends! We are Americans!"

General George S Patton led the Western Task Force, including the 2nd Armored and 3rd Infantry Divisions and elements of the 9th Infantry Division, ashore at Casablanca; General Lloyd Fredendall landed the Central Task Force, comprised of the US 1st Infantry Division and 1st Armored Divisions, at Oran; and General Charles Ryder brought the Eastern Task Force, including the US 34th Infantry Division, elements of the US 9th Infantry and 1st Armored Divisions, and the British 78th Division, ashore at Algiers.

At Casablanca, Vichy defenders put up a spirited defence but were overcome with the assistance of naval gunfire. A naval battle developed in the morning as shore batteries and the unfinished battleship Jean Bart opened fire on supporting Allied warships. These French guns were silenced, and a flotilla of French destroyers and other craft

"DON'T SHOOT! WE ARE YOUR FRIENDS! WE ARE AMERICANS!"

later lost seven ships, three submarines and 1,000 casualties.

Although the initial landings at Oran met little resistance, with the Americans suffering only 400 killed and wounded, French resolve began to stiffen and three days of fighting took place before the defenders surrendered on 10 November. One serious setback occurred when the sloops HMS Walney and Hartland, which were to land 400 American troops to seize the docks at Oran prior to the landings, were sunk. More than 300 soldiers and sailors were killed.

At Algiers, American and British troops landed against scant resistance, and most of the Vichy soldiers they encountered said they'd been ordered to stand down. General Mast had made good on his promise. West of Algiers, Mast intervened personally, ordering Vichy troops to hold their fire as the invaders came ashore in heavy surf.

Yet another unfortunate incident occurred in Algiers harbour as an operation to seize the docks there ended with the capture of many of the 250 American soldiers delivered from a pair of British destroyers. Both ships were heavily damaged and withdrew.

Sometimes facing significant Vichy resistance, Allied forces doggedly advanced inland from the invasion beaches.

Darlan intervenes

As casualties on both sides mounted, a stroke of good fortune helped end the brief conflict between the Allies and Vichy. Admiral Jean Francois Darlan, commander of all Vichy armed forces, was in North Africa. Taken into protective custody, he was persuaded to order his forces to cease hostilities. An armistice signed on 11 November made the end of the four-day conflict official. Allied forces had suffered nearly 1,800 casualties, while the Vichy French lost 2,500 killed, wounded or missing.

Following the initial phase of Torch, the Allies moved sluggishly toward the Tunisian capital of Tunis, hoping to take the city before significant German reinforcements could land. However, bad weather and stiffening enemy resistance left the Allies only a few miles short, resulting in months of bitter fighting before Axis forces were ejected from the African continent in the spring of 1943.

***Right:** General Mark Clark risked his life to obtain Vichy cooperation prior to Operation Torch*

***Above:** American soldiers anxiously await their arrival in North Africa on 8 November 1942*

Images: Wiki / PD / Gov

ROAD TO WATERLOO

QUATRE BRAS

Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Field MBE (Retd.) reveals how this overlooked 1815 clash, in which the famed Marshal Ney took on the Duke of Wellington, had a huge impact on the outcome of Napoleon's final battle on 18 June

WORDS TOM GARNER

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In June 1815, Napoleon Bonaparte launched one of the most dramatic campaigns in military history. Fought in what is now Belgium, his efforts ended in a decisive defeat at Waterloo – a battle that ended the Napoleonic Wars and changed the course of European history. Waterloo was such a momentous event that it is commonly forgotten that it was the culmination of two previous battles – Ligny and Quatre Bras. Both were fought two days before Waterloo with Napoleon's intention being to divide the Allied armies of Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington and the Prussian Field Marshal Gebhard Leberecht von Blücher.

For Wellington, Quatre Bras was a critical engagement that he fought not against Napoleon but his famed subordinate Marshal Michel Ney. Occurring at a strategic crossroads, it was a bloody affair that Wellington almost lost and its significance has long been neglected. Here, historian and retired British Army officer Andrew Field discusses how Wellington's largely inexperienced, multinational force narrowly defeated Ney's courageous troops, and why Quatre Bras was so important to sealing Napoleon's fate.

Divide and conquer

Although he had been defeated and exiled to Elba in 1814, Napoleon made a dramatic return to France in March 1815. The restored King Louis XVIII was forced to flee the country while the former emperor was reinstated. His return prompted the major European powers (known as the Seventh Coalition) to outlaw Napoleon and commit themselves to militarily end his rule.

Surrounded by enemies, Napoleon went on the offensive. "He very quickly realised that he was going to have to fight almost the whole of Europe and had little option but to take the initiative and attack," says Field. "Wellington and the Prussians were already present in the Netherlands but the Austrians and Russians were only just starting to mobilise. Before he faced over 500,000 troops from across Europe, Napoleon decided it would be much better to attack and defeat those two armies in the southern Netherlands. He hoped that defeating the two armies and seizing Brussels might force the other allies into accepting peace rather than continuing the war."

The campaign would be fought in what is now Belgium but was then the recently formed United Netherlands. Wellington commanded c.100,000 multinational Allied troops, while Blücher's Prussian army had c.130,000 men. The outnumbered Napoleon had to devise a risky strategy. "His army was only 120,000 so it was imperative that he kept the two armies apart so that he could defeat them sequentially rather than as a combined army," says Field.

Attacking the two armies from the west or east would disrupt Allied communication lines but Field explains why Napoleon didn't take that

Lady Elizabeth Butler's famous 1875 painting '28th Regiment at Quatre Bras' depicts British infantrymen forming square in a rye field and fending off French cavalry attacks

opportunity: “Although it was the option that Wellington most feared, Napoleon put it aside because he felt it would force the armies to join up. He took what most considered the most risky route, which was to drive between the two armies in order to separate them. He would then organise himself so that a small part of his army could keep one enemy force out of the way while the main part of his army would destroy the other.”

On the other side, Wellington was hampered by the unproven troops under his command. “He knew he didn’t have a great army,” says Field. “Only about one third of it was British, with the remainder being contingents from the Netherlands, Brunswick, Hanover and Nassau. They had all raised new armies once they had thrown off the French yoke during 1813-14 so all their soldiers were very young and inexperienced. Wellington knew that he couldn’t afford to face the whole French army with Napoleon in command on his own.”

Coordination with the Prussians was vital for Wellington but on 15 June 1815 Napoleon crossed the Franco-Netherlands border. The speed of his advance gave the emperor a head start. “Both allies had to concentrate their armies so Napoleon did achieve some surprise,” explains Field. “He gave himself some time to develop his advance and could decide which army he would be able to face and defeat first before they joined up. He didn’t know which army that would be when he crossed the border.

“WITH NAPOLEON ON THE OFFENSIVE, WELLINGTON’S IMMEDIATE ATTENTION FOCUSSED ON THE CROSSROADS AT QUATRE BRAS”

“As the Prussians were providing the frontier force and outposts, it quickly became clear to Napoleon that it would be the Prussians who he would fight first. Having crossed the border and the River Sambre, he directed the bulk of his army against where the Prussians appeared to be concentrating around Ligny. He used his left wing, commanded by Ney, to advance towards Brussels where he expected Wellington to be marching to support the Prussians. Ney’s job was to hold Wellington at bay while Napoleon defeated Blücher.”

With Napoleon on the offensive, Wellington’s immediate attention focussed on the crossroads at Quatre Bras. Translating as ‘Four Arms’, Quatre Bras lies on the crossroad for the Charleroi-Brussels and Nivelles-Namur roads. It was held by the 2nd Netherlands Division commanded by Prince William of Orange. “On the morning of 16 June, Wellington rushed down to Quatre Bras to look at the Netherlanders’ deployment,” says Field. “He knew that some French were approaching but not their strength. The importance of Quatre Bras is that the crossroads controlled the communications between his position and the Prussians. They needed to be held so that once Wellington’s army was concentrated he could theoretically march to support the Prussians.”

Wellington was satisfied with the Netherlands’ division at Quatre Bras and rode over to Blücher at Ligny. During a discussion by a windmill the Allied commanders actually spotted Napoleon: “They saw from the heights by the windmill that there was a large French force in front of them and could actually identify Napoleon and his retinue moving around the battlefield. They were confident that the Prussians faced the bulk of the French army and discussed how Wellington should support the Prussians in the coming battle.”

Source: Wiki / PD / Gov

Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington commanded the Anglo-Allied troops in the southern Netherlands and was already renowned for his military leadership in the Peninsular War

Source: Wiki / PD / Gov

Prince William of Orange pictured leading the 2nd Netherlands Division at Quatre Bras

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Wellington’s army mostly consisted of non-British troops, including Brunswickers who are pictured here entering battle at Quatre Bras

"THE BRAVEST OF THE BRAVE"

Michel Ney was one of Napoleon's most famous and courageous marshals but by 1815 he was a troubled, doomed man

The son of a cooper, Ney had joined the French Army as a private in 1787 and rose to become a marshal. Dubbed "the bravest of the brave" by Napoleon for his extreme courage during the 1812 campaign in Russia, Ney's heroism was beyond doubt, but Field explains that he had a mixed record as a commander. "He led from the front and was much respected in the army, particularly by the junior ranks," he says. "However, he was a difficult subordinate and didn't have a very good record from his independent commands. He had, on occasion, rashly engaged his troops – often against orders – and compromised the various plans of Napoleon. At a higher level he wasn't particularly well regarded, certainly by Napoleon and other marshals."

When Napoleon escaped from Elba, Ney (who had pledged his allegiance to the restored French monarchy) promised Louis XVIII that he would bring Napoleon to Paris in an iron cage. He instead reunited with the emperor at Auxerre, although he was not a prized commander for the Waterloo campaign. "Napoleon was short of marshals and felt he had no option but to call on Ney to take a command," explains Field. "The decision wasn't made until 11 June and Ney didn't join the army until 14 June. He had no staff or headquarters so he was fighting at a disadvantage."

There has been speculation that Ney's conflicted loyalties affected his performance on campaign. "He realised that if Napoleon was defeated he had also compromised himself with Louis XVIII," says Field. "If the French lost he would almost certainly face the death penalty – as of course he did. However, it's hard to know how that might have psychologically affected him during the campaign. Before Quatre Bras he was accused of lacking the impetuosity and determination which had so marked him during previous campaigns."

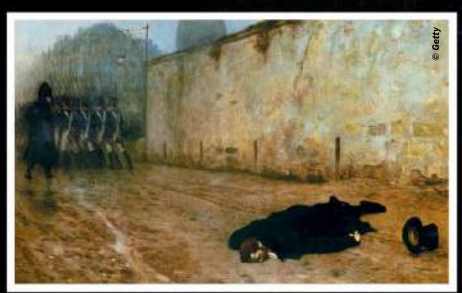
On 16 June 1815, Ney failed to defeat Wellington: "What we possibly see is a distracted Ney who was too focussed on the fighting at Quatre Bras and unable to understand the bigger picture. He was unable to understand Napoleon's necessity to destroy the Prussian army rather than Ney achieving the limited tactics of defeating the army in front of him."

Ney went on to command the left wing of the French army at Waterloo but was arrested after Napoleon's downfall by Louis XVIII's restored regime. He was executed by firing squad in Paris on 7 December 1815 but refused a blindfold – and even gave the order to fire.

As well as being a Marshal of the French Empire, Ney was also granted the specially created titles of Duke of Elchingen and 'Prince of the Moskva' by Napoleon

© Alamy

***Below:** Ney's execution divided French public opinion, with some of the marshal's last words being: "I protest against my condemnation. I have fought a hundred battles for France, and not one against her"*



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"WELLINGTON ORDERED THEM TO CLEAR THE WOODS BUT THE GUARDS SUFFERED SOME OF THE HEAVIEST CASUALTIES OF THE ENTIRE DAY. THE ALLIES ULTIMATELY SUFFERED MORE CASUALTIES THAN THE FRENCH"

Scottish soldiers of the Black Watch desperately fight against French lancers as they form square

Source: Wiki / PD / Gov

Field says the exact details of this meeting are uncertain, particularly the promises Wellington made to Blücher: "We know with the benefit of hindsight that the Prussians were defeated [at Ligny] and that Wellington wasn't able to come to their support. The Prussians went some way to blame their defeat on Wellington not supporting them as they say he promised to do. Wellington claimed quite clearly that he promised the Prussians he would come if he was not attacked himself. He was of course attacked by Ney's wing, which stopped him from marching in support of the Prussians."

Opposing sides

When the Battle of Quatre Bras began on the afternoon of 16 June, the 2nd Netherlands Division of 8,000 men faced Ney's French force of 20,000-21,000 troops. The outnumbered Netherlanders were gradually reinforced by the rest of Wellington's army. "Quatre Bras was unlike other battles where both sides took up positions facing each other – this was because Wellington's concentrating orders initially directed everybody towards Nivelles," explains Field. "When he realised what was happening he desperately marched his army towards Quatre Bras to support the Netherlands Division. British, Brunswicker and Hanoverian troops arrived bit by bit on the battlefield until Ney was considerably outnumbered by the end of the battle."

The battle was also atypical of Wellington's famous terrain-based engagements: "Wellington was quite well known for his defensive positions. His favourite was the 'reverse slope' position where (as he did at Waterloo) he hid most of his men behind a ridge line so that the French didn't know where his strength or cover was. That immediately put the French at a disadvantage but this didn't happen at Quatre Bras.

"The battle was thrust upon Wellington by the advance of the French up the main road. Therefore, the way the ground was used was effectively chosen by the prince of Orange. Wellington returned from his meeting with the Prussians approximately one hour after the battle started and therefore wasn't really in a position to influence the deployment or use of the ground."

Prince William of Orange commanded the 2nd Netherlands Division at Quatre Bras, was wounded at Waterloo and later became King William II of the Netherlands

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NAPOLEON'S LAST VICTORY

Zack White of the University of Southampton discusses the French emperor's final military success at the Battle of Ligny

Fought on the same day as Quatre Bras, the Battle of Ligny saw Napoleon defeat part of the Prussian army commanded by Field Marshal Blücher. Almost forgotten today, Ligny still resulted in very high casualties and was – most intriguingly – the last battlefield victory in Napoleon's military career. Zack White, PhD Researcher at the University of Southampton and host of the podcast *The Napoleonicist*, reveals how the emperor "clutched defeat from the jaws of victory" in a battle that did not reflect Napoleon's military genius.

What were the circumstances that led to the battle?

Ligny was meant to be the realisation of Napoleon's strategy. The previous day he had stolen a march on the Anglo-Dutch and Prussian forces by thrusting his army into a small gap between his two enemies. On 16 June he aimed to capitalise on that by destroying the Prussian force under Blücher, while Ney kept Wellington at bay at Quatre Bras. For Napoleon, defeating the Prussians at Ligny was vital. He had gambled everything on the element of surprise and could not afford to squander the advantage he had gained. For Blücher, all that mattered was to not be beaten – or at the very least not be routed. He and Wellington met at a mill earlier in the day and agreed that Blücher would hold Napoleon off and Wellington would send reinforcements provided he wasn't attacked at Quatre Bras.

What was the strength of the opposing armies?

Napoleon had 68,000 men and 210 cannons while Blücher had 84,000 men and 224 cannons. However, neither force was as skilled and experienced as their commanders would have liked. Napoleon had been forced to compromise on the standards that were applied to recruitment into his elite units such as the Imperial Guard. He also did not have all his best generals with him. Most famously, his former chief-of-staff, Berthier, was not with him, as he died in suspicious circumstances shortly before the Waterloo campaign began. Although his replacement, Marshal Soult, was a gifted commander he was not used to the role and the cohesion of the French army consequently suffered.

Blücher had much bigger problems. Half of his army was Landwehr who were little better than militia and poorly trained and equipped. The army was therefore struggling in terms of discipline. Before the campaign even started, 14,000 Saxon and Silesian troops mutinied and had to be disarmed. However, it was a generally motivated force and Blücher was a revered commander.

Ligny was the last of Napoleon's many victories, which included Austerlitz, Marengo, Jena-Auerstedt and Friedland

© Getty

How did the battle unfold?

In many ways, this was a classic Napoleonic-style bludgeoning match. Napoleon pinned the Prussian left flank in place with a threatening cavalry presence while he bombarded their army with artillery, wearing them down with attrition. Fighting was fierce all along the line, which covered an 8km stretch of the River Ligny. In the town of Ligny, in the centre, things were especially bloody, with some French units suffering 60 percent losses. Just as the Prussians were about to break, and Napoleon was poised to launch a hammer blow with his Imperial Guard, a mysterious body of troops appeared in the rear of the French army, causing confusion.

How would you rate Napoleon's and Blücher's performances?

This was neither commander's finest hour. Napoleon's plan was sound but the mysterious troops that I mentioned were the key failure of the day. They were actually D'Erlon's corps – 12,500 fresh troops who had been summoned from Quatre Bras to assist Napoleon but he was unaware they were so close. As the French paused to

Napoleon (on a white horse) directs the Battle of Ligny next to a windmill

"IN THE TOWN OF LIGNY, IN THE CENTRE, THINGS WERE ESPECIALLY BLOODY, WITH SOME FRENCH UNITS SUFFERING 60 PERCENT LOSSES"

determine who these troops were the Prussians were given vital time to regroup.

For Blücher, Ligny was not an ideal place to fight. The Prussian position was too exposed, which is why they suffered so much from French cannon fire. Wellington himself observed this when he met Blücher and was curtly told by Prussian chief-of-staff General Gneisenau: "Our troops like to see the enemy." Blücher fought bravely though and led from the front. He was even run over by his own men when his horse was killed.

What was the outcome of the fighting?

As soon as Napoleon realised D'Erlon's troops didn't represent a threat, he was able to continue with the battle. However, D'Erlon's men were actually summoned back to Quatre Bras and so played no part in either battle. Nonetheless, at around 7:30pm Napoleon sent in the Imperial Guard, who managed to break through the Prussian lines. Blücher led a cavalry charge in person to try and buy the army time but the Prussians were forced to retreat. Napoleon appeared on the verge of achieving his aim of dividing and conquering his enemies just 48 hours into the campaign.

To what extent did Napoleon's decision to give Marshal Emmanuel de Grouchy 33,000 men to follow Blücher after the battle affect the outcome of Waterloo?

Sending such a large force after the Prussians was a sensible move because Blücher's force hadn't been routed. Although it had suffered 16,000 casualties at Ligny, and around 10,000 desertions, it was still dangerous. It had to be kept occupied, otherwise Blücher might regroup and descend on the French army's flank, exactly as they eventually did at Waterloo.

The issue was the timing of the decision. Grouchy was not despatched until late morning on 17 June, by which point the Prussians had broken away from the French. Grouchy therefore had little information on where they were, so had no chance to keep up the pressure. That failure was Napoleon's fault.

It was an astonishing missed opportunity, and combined with a failure to pounce on Wellington's force at Quatre Bras on 17 June was the point at which Napoleon effectively lost the campaign. By not acting sooner, he squandered everything he had gained from victory at Ligny.

How does Ligny compare to Napoleon's other victories and why has it been forgotten?

Ligny lacked the movement, flair and brilliance of many of Napoleon's earlier victories. It was a battle of attrition won at huge human cost – the French suffered 11,500 casualties. Ultimately, Ligny decided nothing, though it offered Napoleon chances to win the campaign. With better situational awareness he could have used D'Erlon's troops to devastating effect at Ligny to crush the Prussians.

With the same awareness, he could have descended on Wellington on 17 June having achieved his aim of separating the two Allied commanders. Had he sent Grouchy after the Prussians sooner, he could have made it impossible for them to agree to support Wellington on 18 June. In any of those situations, Wellington would never have fought at Waterloo. Instead, Napoleon clutched defeat from the jaws of victory and Ligny was ultimately overshadowed when those missed opportunities came home to roost at Waterloo.

Zack White is the editor of *The Sword and the Spirit*, published by Helion & Company. To purchase a copy visit: **www.helion.co.uk**

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Despite being outnumbered by other nationalities, British soldiers incurred the most casualties at Quatre Bras among Allied troops

"Quite a mauling"

With the 2nd Netherlands Division holding the crossroads, Ney was directed to confront any opposition at Quatre Bras. "His job was to advance up the road, engage any troops from Wellington's army, hopefully defeat them, and stop them interfering in Napoleon's battle against the Prussians," says Field. "But he advanced very slowly, with the evidence pointing to him having to wait before he was ordered to move forward. Napoleon was still developing his ideas for Ligny and ordered Ney to occupy Quatre Bras because he didn't believe or know if there were Allied troops there.

The Netherlanders came under heavy attack and held the position before Wellington arrived with reinforcements. Their stand demonstrated how important Wellington's non-British troops were: "Seventy percent of Wellington's were made up of foreign contingents and he could never have stood against Napoleon at Waterloo with his 30,000 British troops. With the British arriving in dribs and drabs, the contribution of the Netherlands Division at the beginning of the day was vital. Without them, Ney would have been able to seize the position. This in turn would have allowed a sizeable force to help Napoleon at Ligny, which may have seen the destruction of the Prussian army."

Quatre Bras soon turned into a bloody affair. "There is no doubt that the fighting was very severe," says Field. "Some of the units suffered such heavy casualties that they were combined with other battalions to fight at Waterloo. More than half of the Netherlands Division was comprised of very green, inexperienced troops that were not capable of resisting the French in a way that some of the British were. They got quite a mauling and when fresh troops came forward Wellington took them out of the line so that they weren't incapable of fighting again."

Although reinforcements bolstered Wellington's position, they were not immune from the onslaught: "The Brunswickers were some of the first to arrive at a time when the battle was quite critical. Several of their units were broken by the French but the heaviest casualties were borne by the British – not only on the open ground but on the western edge of the battlefield in the Bossu Woods. The French had pretty much captured it when the British Guards Division arrived. Wellington ordered them to clear the woods but the Guards suffered some of the heaviest casualties of the entire day. The Allies ultimately suffered more casualties than the French."

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Napoleon's cuirassiers were widely known for their immense bravery, with Wellington once writing: "I considered our [British] cavalry so inferior to the French"

Kellerman's cuirassiers

The Allies were suffering but so were the French. In the late afternoon, one of the battle's most dramatic events took place when Ney ordered General François Étienne de Kellerman to break through Wellington's line with his cuirassier cavalry brigade: "Ney was receiving constant orders from Napoleon to send reinforcements to Ligny. He was getting desperate and only just managing to hold his position. When he received a final order at 5pm he'd almost run out of fresh troops and ammunition. Wellington was also putting more pressure on them.

"The only uncommitted troops Ney had were Kellerman's cuirassiers. This brigade consisted of two regiments that were understrength with a combined total of 700-800 cavalrymen. Wellington had 30,000 men on the battlefield by this time but Ney had no option but to order the cuirassiers to charge the entire Allied army," Field says.

Despite Kellerman's reservations, he led the charge into the heart of the Allied position: "Although they were eventually repulsed through

General François Étienne de Kellerman leads his French cuirassiers in a courageous charge against Allied lines

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weight of numbers, the cuirassiers achieved some astounding results. They rode down the British 69th Regiment and captured their colours. Two other British regiments broke and ran into what they saw as the shelter of Bossu Wood. Three British regiments were effectively dispersed by the cuirassiers but as their charge continued their horses became exhausted. They were eventually overwhelmed by Allied firepower before they fled back to the French lines. Official reports say that 300 cuirassiers were killed or wounded in the charge. They showed great courage but it was really a suicide mission. I'm sure both Ney and Kellerman knew they were facing failure."

"Courage and élan"

The cuirassiers' bravery was just one example of the formidable French performance. Field believes this was down to the adoption of new tactics: "Several of the commanders, including Ney, had fought the British in Spain and were always defeated by them. For Quatre Bras, they clearly changed their classic 'column' tactics. For example, they were often seen fighting in 'line', which maximised their firepower, and used skirmishers to cover their advance. They got the upper hand against the less experienced Netherlanders and Germans but also the British, so this was a successful tactic.

"Their cavalry performed extremely well and the artillery moved throughout the battle. Many Allied accounts talk about the intensity and effectiveness of the enemy artillery fire. If the Comte d'Erlon's I Corps had turned up there was a very real chance that Wellington might have been defeated. The French fought a very good battle at Quatre Bras and displayed their usual courage and élan."

Kellerman's charge, though brave, did not turn the battle in Ney's favour while Wellington's forces increased: "The French were getting exhausted and running out of ammunition, and as they got weaker Wellington was getting stronger as he received more reinforcements. He became superior in infantry – some 12,000 more than the French – and once Kellerman's charge was repulsed he ordered an advance."

Wellington's line slowly advanced while the French retired to their initial position: "They withdrew until they reached the line they had started from in the morning and there they held firm. As the Allied army met them there the battle came to a halt. Both sides bivouacked in that position only a few hundred metres apart. It's fair to say that both sides were exhausted by that time. As it got dark the battle pretty much petered out."

The highest-profile casualty of Quatre Bras was Frederick William, Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel, who was killed by gunshot during the battle

Quatre Bras resulted in high casualties of approximately 4,800-5,600 Allied killed and wounded compared to 4,100-4,400 on the French side. It was a tactical Allied victory but the French determination rendered Wellington unable to assist Blücher at Ligny. When Wellington learned of the Prussian defeat, he withdrew his force north along the Brussels road even further away from Blücher, who had himself retreated northeast towards Wavre.

"Set up for failure"

Wellington's successes during his military career were many and often celebrated, but Field reflects that Quatre Bras is not so well known: "It was fought on a smaller scale than his larger victories, which were primarily fought during the Peninsular War. Wellington hadn't concentrated or formed his army to fight the French wing commanded by Ney so it wasn't one of his typical battles. It was almost an 'encounter' battle, with more reinforcements arriving to replace exhausted troops. As a matter of scale more than anything else, Quatre Bras ranks lower than nearly all of Wellington's former battles and it was of course completely overshadowed by Waterloo two days later."

The titanic clash between Wellington and Napoleon on 18 June at Waterloo naturally dominates any perspective on the campaign in the southern Netherlands. As a result, Quatre Bras was neglected by survivors and historians for many years. "From a French perspective it hardly gets a mention, including from surviving soldiers," says Field. "The British did write a lot more about it so it is at least clear that it was a very close and hard-fought battle. Without a doubt I think it has been greatly neglected. The first book that was solely about Quatre Bras was only published in 2009, written by Mike Robinson. It has been overshadowed by Waterloo, which I don't think is a good thing."

Field concludes that although Quatre Bras has been retrospectively neglected, it produced outcomes that were vital for the decisive Allied success at Waterloo: "A lot of people who don't know much about the campaign look at Waterloo and think, 'Napoleon had a really good chance of winning.' This is based on the fact that he had a small advantage in troops and had a more homogenous, experienced army that could have defeated Wellington – particularly if the Prussians hadn't arrived.

"However, if you study the whole campaign, including Quatre Bras and Ligny, it becomes clear with hindsight that Napoleon had no chance of winning at Waterloo. He failed to destroy the Prussian army at Ligny and allowed it to escape, which enabled Blücher to march to Wellington on 18 June. Wellington was himself able to withdraw from Quatre Bras unmolested to take up position at Waterloo. Napoleon had therefore been set up for failure because of the actions of the previous few days. A knowledge of both Quatre Bras and Ligny is vital for an understanding of how Waterloo and the campaign finished."

Andrew Field is the author of *Prelude to Waterloo: Quatre Bras*, which is published by Pen & Sword Books. To purchase a copy visit: **www.pen-and-sword.co.uk**

Wellington is cheered by his soldiers as the Allied army marches to Waterloo from Quatre Bras

A STORM IS COMING

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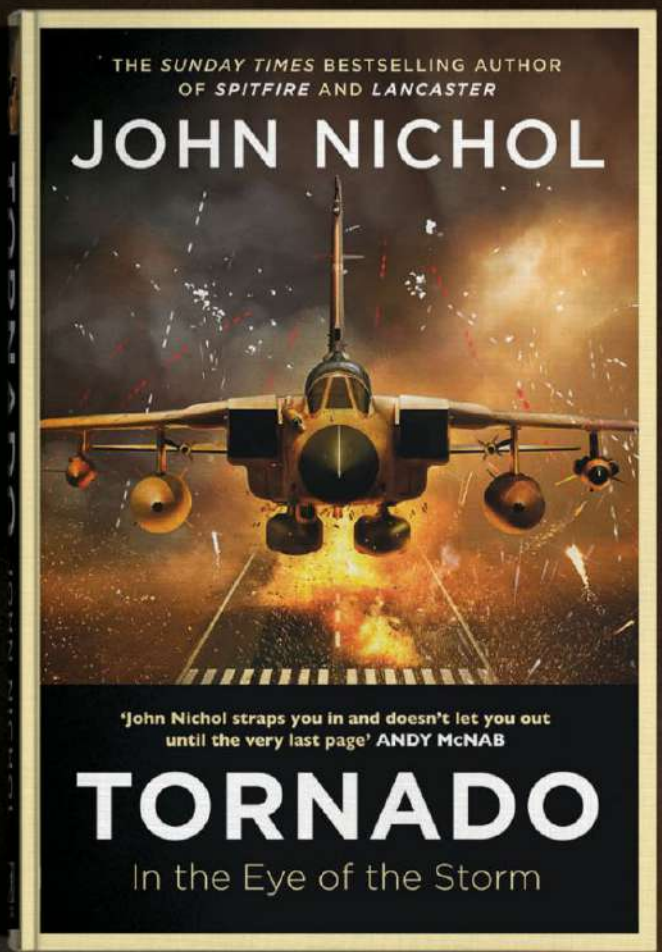
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THE FALL OF SPARTA

Once the dominant power in Ancient Greece, this legendary city state met its end at the hands of its powerful Mediterranean neighbour

WORDS **JAMES HORTON**

When the Spartans and their allies made their defiant and most famous stand against the Persians at Thermopylae, Rome was nothing more than a simple settlement straddling the Tiber River. When Philip of Macedon claimed hegemony over the Greek city states and his son Alexander marched his army to the edge of the known world, Rome had just begun to prove itself as a regional power in central Italy. But by the turn of the 3rd century BCE Sparta had fallen from its near-mythical pedestal and Alexander's empire had fragmented – yet the Romans had kept on conquering.

Over several centuries, the city of Rome had ascended from a monarchy to an oligarchic republic and become sovereign over most of the Italian peninsula. The war-mongering Romans spent the middle of the 3rd century BCE mostly occupied with their first war against Carthage – a rich North African trading city on the southern side of the Mediterranean – over control of the island of Sicily. It was a hard-fought campaign that spanned over two decades, but the grit of the Romans eventually paid off; they claimed not only victory but also their first overseas territory. With most of Italy, the bulk of Sicily and Sardinia now firmly under their control, they were free to turn their attention east for the first time.

Their immediate concern was with Illyria, which sat north of mainland Greece and separated the Macedonians from the Adriatic Sea. The Illyrians had been plaguing Roman trade, and so with their veteran navy the Romans sailed across the water and delivered over 20,000 legionnaries on their enemy's shores. Despite the best preparations from their queen, Teuta, the disorganised and amateur Illyrians were no match for Roman legions and they were easily dispatched.

The Romans had, at this stage, no desire to remain permanently on the other side of the Adriatic, but their presence would not go unnoticed. The chief antagonist to the Roman appearance in Illyria was King Philip V of Macedon, at this point still a virile young man hoping to expand his empire. So when the Carthaginians came back to fight Rome a second time – this time with an exceptional general named Hannibal in their ranks – Philip jumped at the chance to expand his own territory and kick the battered Romans while he did so.

Hannibal had recently won three crushing victories over the Romans, culminating in the Battle of Cannae, where over 50,000 Roman legionnaries lost their lives. Hearing of this success, Philip eagerly offered to attack the Romans' Illyrian footholds and, if possible, invade Italy and help the African general beat the Romans once and for all.

Unfortunately for Philip, the other Greek states were wary of allowing the ambitious Macedonian too much power, and it didn't take much convincing for them to rise up in armed resistance. The Romans were engaged on multiple fronts, but they still sent ships and a small ground force to Greece to form diplomatic ties with the natives. Their efforts were a considerable success as many states were eager to form a coalition to tackle Philip. During the First Macedonian War the Romans were required to do very little fighting on land themselves, as their allies took to the field to combat the Macedonian threat. This task mainly fell to the Aetolian League, who signed the first formal treaty between Rome and a Greek power, but other states soon signed up, including Athens and Sparta. Philip was not without his own supporters in Greece, however, and nearly every significant power in the region was eventually dragged into the conflict on one side or the other.

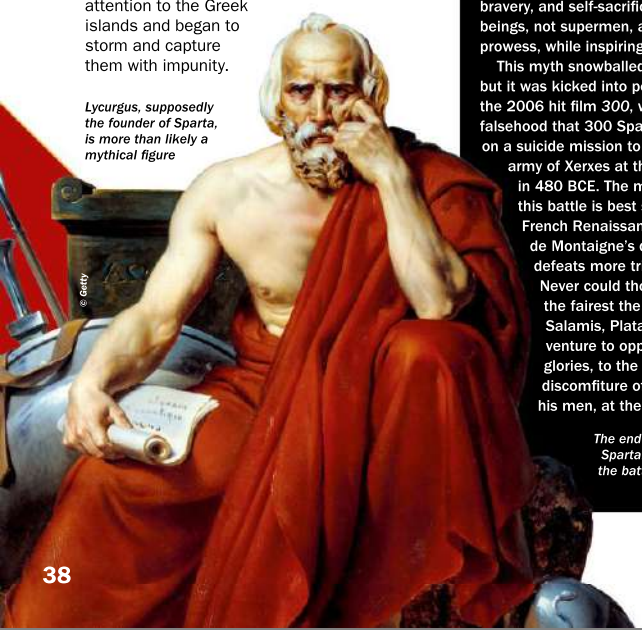
"ROME HAD ASCENDED FROM A MONARCHY TO AN OLIGARCHIC REPUBLIC AND BECOME SOVEREIGN OVER MOST OF THE PENINSULA"

Throughout the protracted campaign, cities, towns and fortifications would change hands but neither side would be definitively defeated, and the war would eventually fizzle out to a lacklustre conclusion for both sides. The Aetolians had grown tired of fighting at Rome's behest, Philip had issues with barbarians at his northern border, and Rome wanted to conclude its conflict with Carthage. Peace was duly declared and Philip was left with a lingering hunger to win a subsequent war. He perhaps did not fully appreciate that almost all of Rome's attention had been on Hannibal and Carthage, and what he had faced was but a fraction of its power. He had been granted a stay of execution, but both powers knew future conflict would be inevitable.

The Romans, for their part, hadn't left a great first impression on many Greeks. Throughout this period of war the Romans were careful to declare themselves as friends and liberators of Greece, there to save the proud city states from an oppressive Macedonian king. What ground troops they did deploy, though, were especially savage. The Greeks thought of them as a barbaric people, and they affirmed this by their treatment of certain Greek cities such as Oreus and Dyme. Valuable metals, paintings and sculptures were all seized by the marauding legions. But the greatest commodity to capture was people – the Romans sold many inhabitants of Dyme into slavery and made a mint in the process. We can't attribute all of their abhorrent behaviour to the pursuit of profit, however, as Roman soldiers were not above raping, pillaging and burning settlements to the ground as their blood ran hot after battle.

Despite the Greeks' disgusted reaction to the Roman way, they themselves had engaged in similar practices in their recent history. Nevertheless, Roman behaviour left a sour taste in the mouths of the Greeks. What sort of liberators, and self-proclaimed protectors of Greek liberty, would sack their own protectorates? The hypocrisy was clear.

Philip did not pause for long before initiating aggressive action once more. He turned his attention to the Greek islands and began to storm and capture them with impunity.



Lycurgus, supposedly the founder of Sparta, is more than likely a mythical figure

© Getty

DEBUNKING THE SPARTANS

"The lies told about ancient Sparta are nearly as old as the city itself," says historian and author Myke Cole. Here he peels back five of the biggest myths and legends surrounding the ancient city state

Since ancient times, people have believed that the Spartans were history's biggest badasses – warriors who never fled, never surrendered and never backed down from a fight. The Spartans were supposedly incorruptible, spurning wealth and luxury, always placing the welfare of their city state above themselves. The notion of the Spartans as selfless, fearless, unbeatable heroes is so widespread that if you type "Spartans" into Amazon you'll have to scroll through pages of self-help books before you get to any history. Today, an entire industry of fitness fads, mud runs, branded weapons, and everything from apparel to action figures is built on the back of what I have termed "The Bronze Lie".

It is truly impressive how widespread this false belief is, and just as shocking when you realise how quickly it crumbles with even a cursory glance at the historical sources. Reading the ancient writers (always outsiders, because no Spartan writing survives beyond a few words chiselled in stone), the truth comes shining through immediately.

From all my research, the fact is this: the Spartans were just like anyone else. They were no worse, but they were also no better. They were every bit as cowardly, greedy and self-aggrandising as any other person, then or now. They were also just as capable of real heroics, bravery, and self-sacrifice. They were human beings, not supermen, and the myth of their prowess, while inspiring, is not history.

This myth snowballed across the millennia, but it was kicked into pop-culture overdrive by the 2006 hit film *300*, which perpetuates the falsehood that 300 Spartans gave their lives on a suicide mission to hold back the Persian army of Xerxes at the Battle of Thermopylae in 480 BCE. The mythic resonance of this battle is best summed up by the French Renaissance philosopher Michel de Montaigne's declaring, "There are defeats more triumphant than victories. Never could those four sister victories, the fairest the sun ever beheld, of Salamis, Plataea, Mycale and Sicily, venture to oppose all their united glories, to the single glory of the discomfiture of King Leonidas and his men, at the pass of Thermopylae."

Nothing could be farther from the truth, and it is this lie that I first debunk here, as it forms the foundation for all the rest.

Although in my book *The Bronze Lie* I focus on the human failings of the Spartans in an effort to debunk the many pervasive myths surrounding them, there are many glorious successes to their story as well: from their incredible victories at the Battles of First Mantinea (418 BCE) and the Nemea (394 BCE), to their brilliant use of soft power and alliances to advance policies without fighting. There are so many real Spartan heroes to celebrate, not the mythic Leonidas, but the very

The enduring myth of Spartan prowess on the battlefield is just that – a myth

real King Archidamus, who, when his efforts to secure peace with Athens failed, stepped up and did his best to lead a war.

There is also Brasidas, whose charm, diplomacy and wits secured much of northern Greece for his city state without ever lifting a spear. This barely scratches the surface of what the real Spartans have to show us. These were a people who gave us genuine heroes. But we will never see them, never have the chance to be inspired by them, if we insist on distorting the record. The lionisation of Sparta's best is an attempt to honour them, but people are best honoured when we remember them as who they actually were.

MYTH 1 THERMOPYLAE WAS A GLORIOUS SUICIDE MISSION

Nearly everything we think we know about the Battle of Thermopylae (480 BCE) is wrong. There were probably around 1,000 Spartans (the famous 300 were just the noble elite part of the Spartan force) and that's not counting their slaves, who also fought. Each Spartan noble would have had at least one slave, but at the Battle of Plataea in 479 BCE, each had seven. If this were the case at Thermopylae, then the Spartans would have had an additional 2,100 slave troops. This Spartan force was part of a larger army of around 7,000 allied Greeks. Far from being a suicide mission, Herodotus tells us they expected to be reinforced. And far from a glorious defeat, it was an utter disaster, a speed bump for the Persians, who went on to capture and burn Athens after a paltry delay of just three days. The defeat was so disastrous that the Spartan myth was likely coined at this time as an effort to shore up Greek morale and keep the rest of the Greeks from surrendering to Persia.

The Spartan king Leonidas' celebrated taunt "Come and take them" to Xerxes' demand that the Spartans surrender their arms conveniently ignores the fact that Xerxes did come and take them, after killing Leonidas and all of his men, cutting off the king's head and sticking it on a pole.

MYTH 2 SPARTANS NEVER RAN FROM A FIGHT

The Spartans withdrew, retreated, backed down and fled the field of battle far too many times to document here. Their fear of Athenian naval supremacy was well known. After their victory at the Battle of Corcyra in 427 BCE, the Spartan fleet hoisted their sails and ran the moment Athenian reinforcements arrived. They famously backed down again in 411 BCE, despite the fact that their navy was much improved, buoyed by gold from the very Persians they fought at Thermopylae.

But the Spartans didn't just flee on the water. Their most famous defeat at the hands of the rival city state of Thebes – the Battle of Leuctra in 371 BCE – snapped Sparta's spine and ended their relevance as a military power in Ancient Greece. The defeat was so total that a second Spartan army, though certainly positioned to engage the Thebans, backed off rather than face them in the field.

MYTH 3 SPARTANS NEVER SURRENDERED

The best known example of a Spartan surrender is perhaps the most instructive. During Sparta's long and wasteful war with Athens, the Peloponnesian War (really, multiple wars spanning more than 50 years), the Athenians established an epiteichisma (a forward operating base) in Spartan territory. In the course of trying to drive the Athenians out, 120 of the elite Spartan citizens found themselves cut off on the island of Sphacteria in 425 BCE.

By all accounts, they fought bravely, living up to their legend. But when the Athenians surrounded them by scaling a cliff the Spartans believed to be unclimbable, the Spartans surrendered. What happened to those surrendering Spartans debunks another lie.

MYTH 4 SPARTA PUNISHED THOSE WHO SURVIVED DEFEAT

According to myth, the 120 captives from Sphacteria should have been termed tresantes - 'tremblers' who would live as outcasts should they ever return to Sparta – unable to hold public office, excluded from gymnastics, games and communal dining or from conducting business, forced to dress in rags and subjected to beatings by their own countrymen.

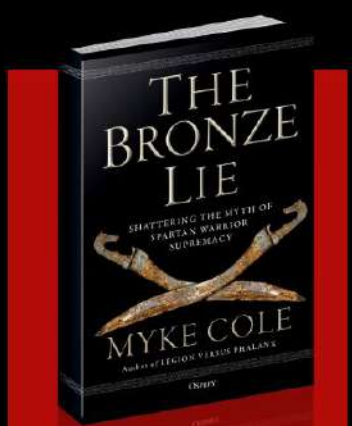
However, none of this happened when these 120 men were returned to the city state. Some lip service was paid, but in the end they were not really punished. These were elite men from powerful families and, as is so common with the rich and powerful, the rules did not apply to them.

MYTH 5 SPARTANS HATED WEALTH

The myth that Spartans hated wealth and even refused to use gold and silver coins was one of many promulgated by the Greek philosopher Plutarch in his famous *Life of Lycurgus* – a biography of Sparta's almost certainly mythic founder. Plutarch claimed that the Spartans redistributed all wealth so that each man would only have what he needed to serve in the army and no more. There are so many examples of Spartan greed that they could easily fill their own article, so I'll just point out a few here.

Most historians agree (and Aristotle points out) that Spartan wealth inequality was so exaggerated that it caused the oliganthropia - Sparta's military manpower crisis that saw its elite citizen warriors dwindle until it finally resorted to arming its slaves. Service in Sparta's military elite was dependent on a Spartan's ability to pay his communal mess dues, and as wealth in the city state accrued in fewer and fewer hands over the years, fewer and fewer Spartans could afford to cover the bill and found themselves cast out of the elite status.

There are numerous accounts of Spartan kings and notable leaders accused of taking bribes. Perhaps most famous is the Spartan king Leotychidas, who after Thermopylae campaigned against the Thessalians – northern Greeks who had bent the knee to the Persians. His campaign was so ineffective that it came as no surprise when a glove packed with silver was found in his tent – bribe money paid by the pro-Persian Aleudae clan to get him to wave off.



THE BRONZE LIE

Myke's new book debunking the biggest myths of Ancient Sparta is out now in all good stores

But perhaps more worrying for Rome was his covert pact with Antiochus, king of the Seleucid Empire based in Syria, which saw them agree to attack Egypt's holdings in the Aegean and Asia Minor. The Romans were increasingly concerned about Philip's relationship with another superpower and opted to stop him before he grew too powerful.

For this task they sent one of the newly elected consuls – the highest-ranking Roman magistrate – named Titus Quinctius Flamininus, who arrived in Greece in 198 BCE at not yet 30 years old. Demands by Flamininus to Philip fell on deaf ears, and soon the two generals and their allies met on the field.

Flamininus' forces managed to get the upper hand during the Battle of Aous Narrows, but the restricted pass allowed Philip to escape with most of his force. This defeat did prove a catalyst for the Achaean League to break rank with Philip, however, which was a serious coup for Flamininus. In a bid to win a new ally, Philip offered the captured Greek town of Argos to the ruler of Sparta, Nabis. Nabis accepted the gift but he immediately went over to the Roman side anyway, temporarily forgetting his previous animosity and rivalry with the Achaeans.

The Romans were winning the diplomatic game, and as the campaigning season of the next year opened, they strengthened their hand even more by winning over the Boeotian League, albeit mostly through thinly veiled intimidation. A decisive encounter was looming and would arrive after the winter, when the two sides clashed at Cynoscephalae.

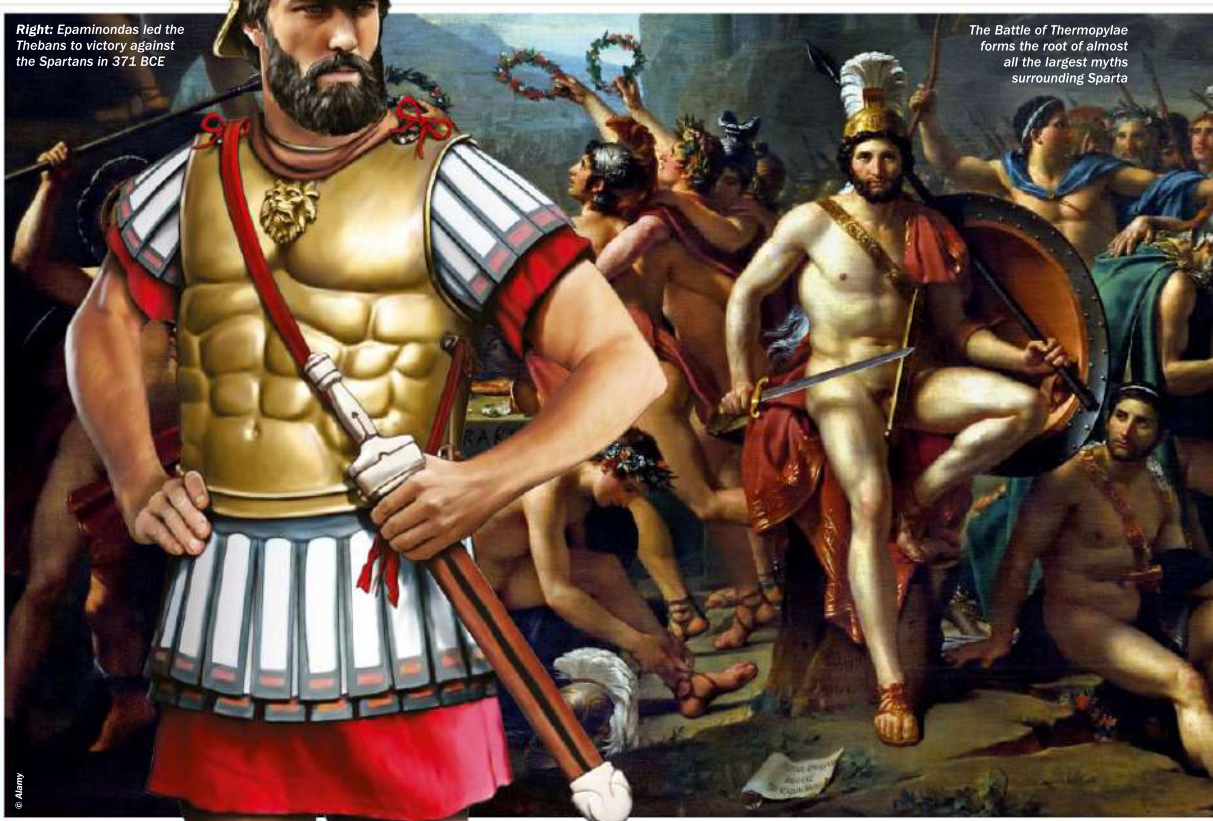
Flamininus had been hounding Philip's force as it searched for a well-provisioned position, and under heavy rain and dense fog the two forces camped either side of a ridge named the 'dog-heads', or Cynoscephalae. Both generals sent their cavalry towards the ridge under low visibility and the two sides were startled to find their enemy right in front of them. Skirmishing between the cavalry began, and as more forces rushed in to help, things soon escalated into a full pitched battle.

It was the advantages enjoyed by the Roman maniple system – which arranged soldiers in neat, semi-independent units of around 300 men – that proved pivotal in the fight at Cynoscephalae. Philip's phalanxes, which were composed of dense clusters of pike men, initially enjoyed success on their slightly elevated position and drove the Romans back down the hill. Flamininus attempted to force his legions through on his left flank but was stopped in his tracks, and in some places his line began to collapse. Fortunately, the triarii – who were spear-wielding veteran legionnaries typically held in reserve – were ready and waiting to plug the gap, offering a defensive position for others to rally behind.

One of Flamininus' officers then exploited his army's flexibility by peeling off a contingent of maniples from the right flank, who were fighting higher up the hill, and leading them behind the Macedonian line. He sent his soldiers crashing down into the enemy rear, and the fighting soon descended into rout. The Romans mercilessly pursued their foe, hacking down around 8,000 of Philip's soldiers and capturing another 5,000 as prisoners. It was nothing short of a decisive victory for Rome.

The terms of surrender were harsh for Philip, as Macedon was crippled through confiscated territory. However, the Greek sides who fought for Rome did not fare as well as they thought they would after his defeat, as Flamininus denied them new territory. In their desperation to throw off the yolk of Macedon they had invited in the Romans, but, ironically, they were merely swapping one overlord for another.

The prospect of Roman hegemony wasn't lost on the Aetolians, who bemoaned their lack of awarded territory by Flamininus. But what the Romans sought was a balance of power in Greece – they wanted no one to threaten their



***Right:** Epaminondas led the Thebans to victory against the Spartans in 371 BCE*

The Battle of Thermopylae forms the root of almost all the largest myths surrounding Sparta

© Alamy

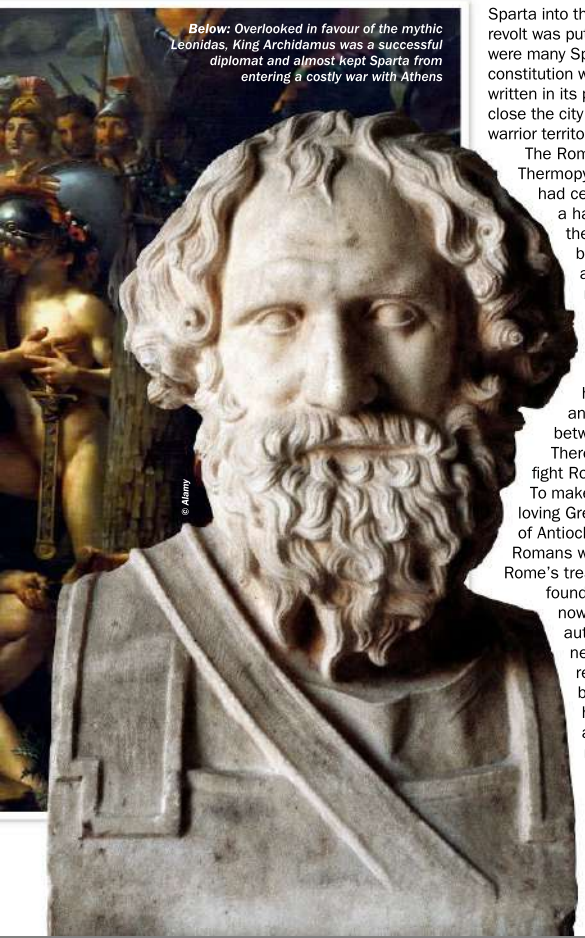
informal control of the region, regardless of whether they were friend or foe. In a sly move, Flamininus pronounced the Greeks as free and announced the withdrawal of all Roman troops. The locals rejoiced, but the physical removal of an army did not release the Greeks from Roman shackles. The Romans put in place loyal rulers wherever they could, and, if needed, they could simply send their forces back. Rome was the new master of Greece, and none truly believed anything different.

There was one task Flamininus was keen on settling before the Romans departed en masse, and that was war on Sparta. The ancient city's gift from Philip, Argos, had been part of the Achaean League before the Second Macedonian War had begun, and the League wanted it back. Sparta's ruler, Nabis, refused, and so Flamininus and his allies amassed a massive force numbering up to 50,000 men and marched on the city.

The allied forces swiftly recovered Argos, but after Nabis declined an offer of peace they continued their march. The two sides clashed outside the city's boundaries and the Spartans were overwhelmed. Retreating within the city walls, Nabis had accumulated provisions to endure a siege and held out hope of survival. Flamininus was in no mood to wait, however, and ordered his numerous forces to storm the city. The narrow passageways of the city streets worked to impede the invaders' progress, and the Spartans successfully used burning debris to repel their enemies. The soldiers were recalled and redeployed the following day. The Spartans again managed to endure, but by the third day they were so battered Nabis had little choice but to surrender.

Flamininus decided to leave Nabis in charge of Sparta under harsh terms, much to the Achaean League's chagrin. They had dreamed for years of assimilating the city, and following the Roman's departure from Greek shores wasted little time in realising this goal. It was Nabis himself who struck the match, though. Antiochus, the leader of the Seleucids of Asia Minor and Syria, had recently been beckoned by the Aetolians to 'liberate Greece' from the Romans. The Spartans leapt at the opportunity to throw off the Roman yolk and began to immediately attack the port of Gytheum held by the Achaean League. An Achaean general, Philopoemen, did not wait for the Romans to offer a response.

His naval counter-attack against the Spartans got off to a poor start, as embarrassingly his flagship fell apart at sea, but his luck turned as Nabis was assassinated by the Aetolians. Philopoemen marched on Sparta and captured it, fulfilling a long-held Achaean ambition. Sparta would stir and lash out at its new overlords over the next few turbulent years, but these would prove to be its death throes. Philopoemen was at first successful in peacefully re-incorporating Sparta into the League, but the city's second revolt was put down with more force. Not only were many Spartans butchered, but their storied constitution was torn to pieces and a new one written in its place, essentially bringing to a close the city state's existence as a cultural warrior territory.



Below: Overlooked in favour of the mythic Leonidas, King Archidamus was a successful diplomat and almost kept Sparta from entering a costly war with Athens

© Alamy

The Romans would engage Antiochus at Thermopylae, the very site where Sparta had cemented its eternal legend, only a handful of years later. Despite the ending to that epic encounter being common knowledge to almost every Greek, Antiochus did not sufficiently prepare for the Romans employing the Persian trick of surrounding his forces via the alternate route around the pass. Like Leonidas before him, Antiochus was surrounded, and his forces were brutally crushed between the Roman pincer.

There were now no superpowers left to fight Rome in the entire Mediterranean. To make matters worse for any freedom-loving Greeks, the subsequent defeat of Antiochus in Asia Minor provided the Romans with an embarrassment of riches. Rome's treasury – and her leading men – found their coffers stuffed. The Romans now had uncompromising power, authority and wealth. With this new-found confidence in their own resources and ability, the Romans began to cast aside the façade of helpful protector of Greek liberty and assume their authoritarian role more openly.

It would fall to Macedon to defiantly resist Roman might one last time, but it was no longer

"NOT ONLY WERE MANY SPARTANS BUTCHERED, BUT THEIR STORIED CONSTITUTION WAS TORN TO PIECES AND A NEW ONE WRITTEN IN ITS PLACE"

Philip at the helm, rather his eldest son Perseus. Perseus invested heavily in strengthening his position but was careful not to break any terms of his treaty with Rome. But this concession was not enough for the Romans – they couldn't stand idly by while a rival king gathered power in their new dominion and stirred the patriotic hearts of the Greeks. They soon declared war on Perseus and sent 50,000 soldiers to Greece.

The young Macedonian king got the better of his opponents during their first two campaigning seasons there, and the rebellious towns viciously enslaved by the Romans only helped to elevate Perseus to the position of saviour and encourage some to defect to his cause. However, the young king still craved a pitched battle that would bring about definitive victory – at least in the short term. He would get his wish at Pydna, where the two armies would clash and the war would be settled. Perseus' phalanxes opened strongly; the Romans had not yet fully formed their lines and he sent his men charging into them, inflicting heavy casualties. However, this had the consequence of breaking the phalanxes' tight formation, and the Romans swiftly capitalised on this error by sending units in between the exposed cracks in the enemy line. The legionnaries then proceeded to erode Perseus' forces from the inside out, collapsing his phalanx and inflicting terrible casualties.

After the fall of Perseus, the Romans acted to hamstring Macedonian power by dividing the territory into four republics. This worked for a time, but three pretenders to the throne over the following few years encouraged the Romans to permanently garrison Macedon and eventually settle it as an official province of the empire. And so the burning flame of Macedon had finally been extinguished, and with it the last glimmer of hope for a Rome-free Greece for the next 500 years.

The conquest of Greece brought about a new age of Rome. The Greeks may have looked rather dimly upon the Italian 'barbarians', but many Roman senators looked upon Greece's culture with admiration. Multitudes of captured paintings, sculptures and educated slaves were purchased by Rome's leading men, and with the newfound wealth of international empire came the flamboyant age of Rome, complete with Hellenistic splendour. Some conservative Romans would fight in vain for traditional Roman virtue to remain centre stage, but yet more found themselves enamoured with Greek art, literature, philosophy and lifestyle.

This reverence for the Greeks would continue into the Roman Principate and beyond, as Emperor Hadrian would remain a devout lover of all things Hellenistic. The Greeks may have lost their liberty under the Romans, but their legend and influence would continue to inspire many for millennia.

CENTRAL TENNESSEE 15-16 DECEMBER 1864

NASHVILLE

A veteran Confederate army desperately tries to change the course of the war in its final months

WORDS WILLIAM E WELSH

On the fog-shrouded morning of 15 December 1864, the soldiers of the 14th US Colored Troops broke through the thin screen of Confederate skirmishers posted in the rifle pits, in front of the Chattanooga & Nashville Railroad. After regrouping, they surged across the railway tracks in a bid to outflank the right of the Confederate lines on the outskirts of Nashville.

Suddenly, Confederate 12-pounder smoothbore guns in a lunette adjacent to the tracks erupted with canister – tin cans filled with deadly iron balls – which shredded the regiment's ranks. Confederate infantry, which had been hiding in a stand of timber, fired a thunderous volley into the Union regiment's ranks. The survivors fled in the direction from which they had come – within ten minutes they had lost 117 men.

It was the kind of tactical success that Confederate General John Bell Hood so desperately sought when he lured Union Major General George Thomas to attack his earthworks on the south side of Nashville after a nearly two-week standoff between the armies.

In the war-ravaged South in the final months of the conflict, Hood lacked the troops that would be needed to capture Nashville. Because of this, the best he could hope for was to inflict heavy casualties on Thomas' army, which had been cobbled together from various Union commands in the Western Theatre to take on the crack troops of Hood's Army of Tennessee. If the Confederates could continue throughout the day to repulse other piecemeal Union attacks with similar success, Hood just might win a tactical victory against a much larger Union army.

“WHILE HOOD’S FIGHTING SPIRIT WAS UNDIMINISHED, HIS BODY HAD BEEN RAVAGED BY INJURIES SUFFERED IN BATTLE”

Union troops break through the Confederate line on the second day of the battle, sparking a Confederate retreat south

Long odds for success

The battered armies of the Confederate States of America faced near-certain defeat by fall 1864. After years of campaigning, General Robert E Lee, commanding the Army of Northern Virginia, was besieged in the Richmond-Petersburg sector by the Army of the Potomac under the watchful eye of General Ulysses S Grant, who president Abraham Lincoln had made the commander of all Union armies in March 1864.

The Army of Tennessee under the command of General Joseph Johnston had been steadily retreating through northern Georgia since Major General William T Sherman began his offensive to capture Atlanta in March 1864.

Sherman had a grand army composed of three formerly regional armies named after the Ohio, the Cumberland and the Tennessee rivers that totalled 112,000 troops.

Sherman had reached the Chattahoochee River just north of the city in early July. Confederate President Jefferson Davis, who was disappointed with 57-year-old Johnston’s performance, sacked him on 17 July and replaced him with the much-younger Hood.

Hood, a 33-year old Kentuckian who had graduated in West Point’s Class of 1853, had a reputation as a fighter from his days commanding a brigade and later a division in the Army of Northern Virginia. While Hood’s fighting spirit was undiminished, his body had been ravaged by injuries suffered in battle. He had lost the use of his left arm when it was hit by shrapnel at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, in July 1863, and his right leg had been amputated at Chickamauga, Georgia, two months later.

Initially Hood had 60,000 troops with which to fight off Sherman’s legions. He attacked various parts of the Union juggernaut at different points around Atlanta between 20 July and 31 August. After these four bloody clashes, the fiery Confederate commander had nothing to show for his efforts. The grinding battles resulted in 16,000 Confederate casualties.

OPPOSING FORCES

UNION ARMY

COMMANDER
Maj. Gen. George H Thomas

INFANTRY
55,500

CAVALRY
9,000

ARTILLERY
174

TOTAL
64,500

VS

CONFEDERATE ARMY

COMMANDER
General John Bell Hood

INFANTRY
25,000

CAVALRY
6,000

ARTILLERY
108

TOTAL
31,000

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As August drew to a close, Hood abandoned Atlanta and Sherman took possession of it on 2 September. In late October Hood devised a plan to invade Tennessee in the hope of forcing Sherman to follow him. If Hood could capture Nashville it would boost Confederate morale and perhaps enable Hood to continue north into Union territory. With Confederate president Davis' approval, Hood prepared to invade Union-controlled Middle Tennessee.

Thomas must defeat Hood

While Sherman prepared to march the best 60,000 troops in his army from Atlanta through the heart of Georgia to Savannah, he tasked Thomas with preventing Hood from retaking occupied territory in Middle Tennessee. Of his remaining troop, Sherman left some to garrison Atlanta and sent the rest to Thomas.

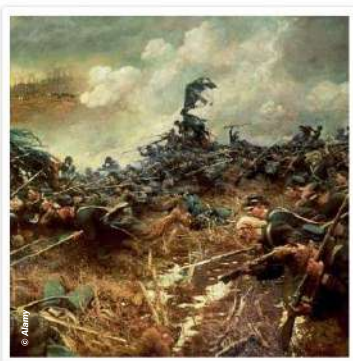
Thomas, who had graduated from West Point in 1840, had a knack for defensive tactics, as shown by his brilliant rearguard action as a corps commander at Chickamauga in September 1863. He had single-handedly saved Major General William Rosecrans' Union Army of the Cumberland from destruction. In recognition of his achievement, President Lincoln replaced Rosecrans with Thomas in October 1863.

Thomas arrived in Nashville in late October to oversee its defence and defeat Hood. The forces under his control were scattered throughout the region. They included 8,000 garrison troops in Nashville; a Provisional Detachment of 8,500 troops in Chattanooga led by Major General James Steedman; and 30,000 veteran troops in Major General David Stanley's IV Corps and Major General John Schofield's XXIII Corps in Pulaski, Tennessee. In addition, Major General Andrew J Smith's 9,000-man XVI Corps received orders to march from Mississippi to join Thomas in Nashville. Thomas also had 9,000 cavalrymen under the command of Brigadier General James Wilson, but they needed to be refitted with fresh horses and new carbines for the coming campaign.

Rash decision at Franklin

Hood's army set out for Nashville on 20 November. His army numbered 32,000 infantry organised into three corps and 6,000 cavalry. Hood hoped that his march into Middle

***Below:** Union infantry storms Shy's Hill on the second day of the Battle of Nashville*



01 UNION DIVERSIONARY ATTACK FAILS
A diversionary attack by Union forces against the Confederate right on the morning of 15 December encounters fierce resistance from entrenched veteran troops.
02 CONFEDERATE LEFT FLANK THREATENED
Union cavalry armed with repeating carbines working in tandem with infantry capture redoubts No. 4 and No. 5 in the early afternoon of the first day. This enables the cavalry to begin to turn the Confederate left flank.
03 HOOD REINFORCES HIS LEFT
General Hood pulls Major General Edward Johnson's division from the Confederate centre and sends it to the left where two brigades of soldiers, the first to arrive, deploy behind a stone wall along the Hillsboro Pike in an effort to shore up the endangered flank.
04 BLOODY FIGHT FOR MONTGOMERY HILL
Charging masses of Union infantry carry the first line of Confederate trenches on the crest of Montgomery Hill, only to run headlong into a wall of resistance on the reverse slope. Confederates fire heavy volleys that check the Union advance.
Chalmers
Johnson
Cox
McArthur
2
Union Troops
Cavalry
Infantry
Confederate Troops
Cavalry
Infantry

05 FEDERALS STORM CONFEDERATE SALIENT

Soldiers from two Federal divisions charge the salient where Redoubt No. 1 is situated in the late afternoon of the first day. As they sweep over the entrenchments, they find that the Confederates are disengaging.

06 FIRST DAY ENDS WITH CONFEDERATE RETREAT

Johnson's troops panic as they are outflanked by Federal cavalry and under heavy attack from the Union XVI Corps. This precipitates a retreat of the entire Confederate left wing 1.5km to the Granny White Pike, where Hood rallies the troops.

07 UNION ATTACK RESUMES AGAINST OVERTON HILL

A Union attack at mid-afternoon on the second day of the battle against well-entrenched Confederates on Overton Hill fails to make any headway.

08 COORDINATED UNION ATTACK SHATTERS CONFEDERATE ARMY

The Union army assails all points of the Confederate line in the late afternoon of the second day. When the Confederate position on Shy's Hill crumbles, the Confederate army begins a rapid retreat south along the Franklin Pike.

Illustration: Nicolas Fieder

Tennessee would compel Sherman to pursue him, but Sherman had already given Thomas the forces necessary to contain Hood. Thomas instructed Schofield to offer battle to Hood if necessary to slow his advance northward to allow time for more Union reinforcements to arrive in Nashville. Schofield had great respect for Hood's capabilities as a commander. "He'll hit you like hell, before you know it," he had told Sherman during the Atlanta campaign.

Hood's army easily bypassed Pulaski to the west, reaching Spring Hill, Tennessee, on 29 November in the rear of Schofield's position. Expecting Schofield to force his way through the Confederate army, Hood planned to ambush Schofield's army but his corps commanders failed to successfully carry out his orders. Hood shared the blame for the debacle in that he had retired for the night and was not present at the front when Schofield marched right past the Confederate bivouac that night. "The best move in my career as a soldier… came to naught," Hood wrote afterwards.

Schofield reached Franklin, which was 32km south of Nashville, the following morning. Hood, who was furious that his generals missed an opportunity to destroy or heavily damage Schofield's army, ordered what turned out to be a very costly frontal attack against Schofield's troops in pre-existing earthworks at Franklin. Among the 6,250 Confederate dead and wounded were six Confederate generals. Hood's decision to risk a costly attack against entrenched troops showed not only that he was rash, but also that he lacked the skills and experience necessary for high command.

Hood entrenches at Nashville

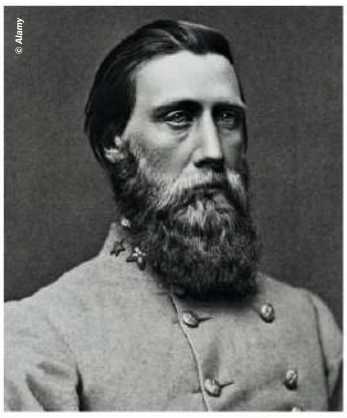
Federal forces had held the capital of Tennessee since February 1862. By December 1864 the city was protected by an inner and outer fortified belt, the flanks of which were anchored on the Cumberland River.

Schofield reached Nashville on 1 December, and Hood arrived the following day. The Confederate commander undertook a partial siege of the city, entrenching his army on a 6.5km front along an arc of hills south of Nashville. Lieutenant General Alexander Stewart's corps held the Confederate left along Hillsboro Pike, Lieutenant General Stephen D Lee's corps held the centre, and Major General Benjamin Cheatham's corps held the right along the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad.

The Confederate left was the most vulnerable to attack because beyond the Hillsboro Pike there was ample room for Thomas to manoeuvre his troops for a large-scale attack. Hood instructed Stewart to refuse his flank and strengthen his earthworks by constructing five redoubts, each of which housed two or four cannon and 100 infantry.

Hood's siege lines were from between one to three kilometres south of the Union fortifications protecting Nashville. Hood hoped that in the coming days Thomas would wreck his army trying to dislodge the Confederates from their position.

Hood sent Forrest's cavalry to the southeast to tear up sections of the Nashville &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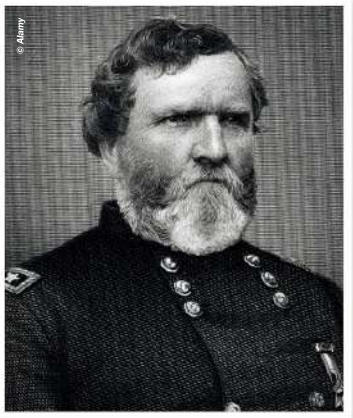
***Above**: General John Bell Hood commanded the Confederate Army*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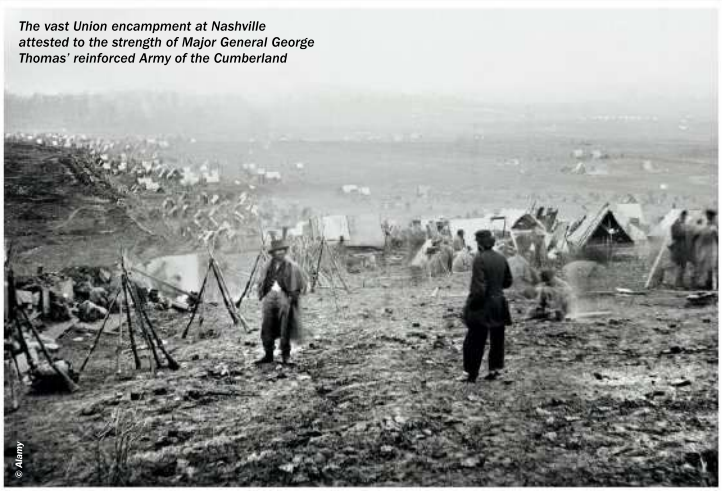
***Above**: Commander of the Union Army, Major General George H Thomas*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The vast Union encampment at Nashville attested to the strength of Major General George Thomas' reinforced Army of the Cumberland

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Chattanooga Railroad. Thomas decided not to send Wilson's cavalry to engage Forrest because of its poor condition. He therefore sent the Union cavalry across the Cumberland River to Edgefield to rest and refit.

Grant browbeats Thomas

When Thomas informed Washington that it would be at least ten days before he launched offensive operations against the Confederate Army of the Tennessee encamped outside his fortifications, Grant demanded immediate action in order to prevent Forrest's troopers from destroying bridges and track along the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad.

With each passing day that Thomas failed to attack Hood, Grant grew more incensed. "Attack Hood at once and wait no longer for a remount of your cavalry," Grant telegraphed Thomas on 6 December. Bowing to Grant's wishes, Thomas scheduled an attack for 7 December, but an ice storm struck the region, making it unrealistic to take offensive action until the weather improved.

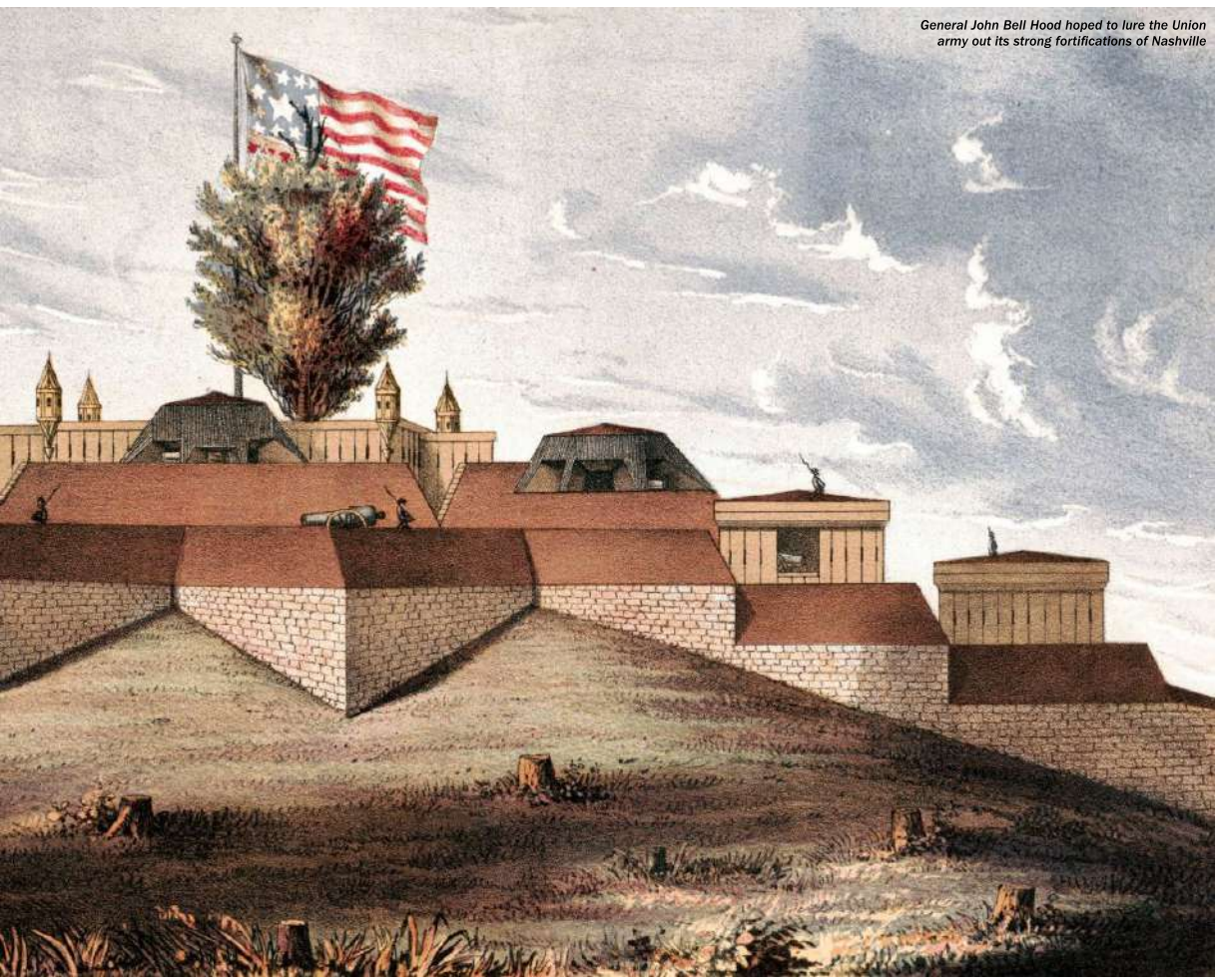
"STEWART'S 4,800 CONFEDERATES, WHO WERE OUTNUMBERED FIVE TO ONE, WATCHED WITH APPREHENSION AS A 3KM-LONG UNION LINE OF BATTLE THICK WITH REGIMENTAL FLAGS AND GUIDONS HEADED THEIR WAY"

During this time, Thomas put the final touches to his battle plan. Steedman's Provisional Detachment would launch a diversionary attack against the Confederate right wing to pin down Cheatham's corps. The main attack would consist of a "left grand wheel" to strike that portion of Stewart's line along the Hillsboro Pike. Brigadier General Thomas Wood's IV Corps and Major General Andrew J Smith's XVI Corps would lead the attack, and Schofield's XXIII Corps would follow in reserve. Wilson's cavalry would cover the army's southern flank against a possible attack by Forrest.

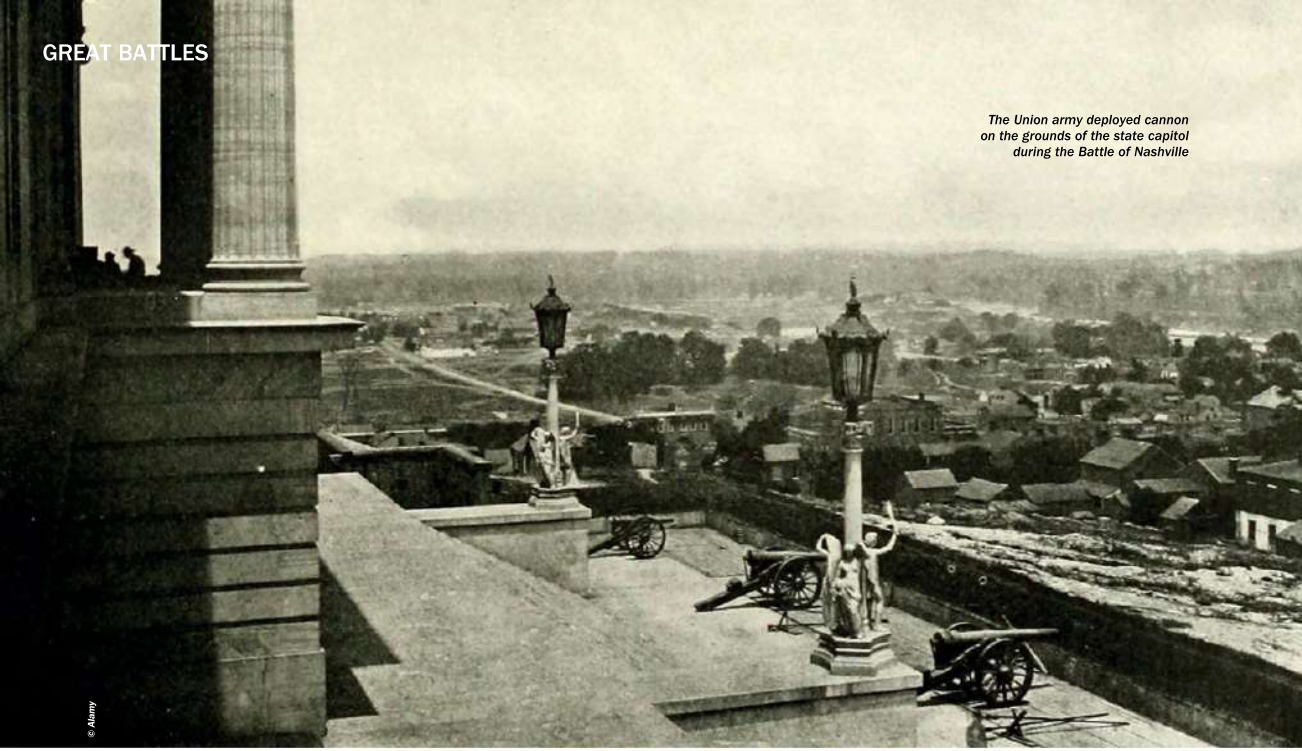
"Delay no longer for weather or reinforcements," Grant wired Thomas on 12 December. The weather began to improve the following day, but Thomas still did not launch his attack. At that point, Grant made plans to travel from Petersburg, Virginia, to Nashville to take command himself. But Thomas attacked Hood before Grant entrained for Tennessee.

Yankees storm rebel redoubts

Thomas took up a position in the centre of the outer fortified belt to observe the progress of the Federal attack. A thick fog clung to the landscape on the morning of 15 December



General John Bell Hood hoped to lure the Union army out its strong fortifications of Nashville



The Union army deployed cannon on the grounds of the state capitol during the Battle of Nashville

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Major General George Thomas holds a council of war during the Battle of Atlanta that preceded the Nashville campaign

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as the ground continued to thaw. Steedman's diversionary attack in the morning stalled in the face of determined Confederate resistance, and his effort failed to prevent Hood from shifting forces later in the day from the right wing to the left one.

As the three Union infantry corps began their left grand wheel, Stewart's 4,800 Confederates, who were outnumbered five to one, watched with apprehension as a 3km-long Union line of battle thick with regimental flags and guidons headed their way.

Wood's divisions attacked the northern half of Stewart's line, while Smith's divisions attacked the southern half of his line. Before Smith's men could attack the earthworks, though, they had to clear the Rebels from Redoubts 3, 4, and 5, which were situated outside of the main line of trenches.

While veteran Confederate soldiers in the north held their ground against the Federals, the southern end of Stewart's line came under attack from cavalry and infantry backed by rifled guns firing solid shot and fused shells. Wilson's troopers on the extreme right of the Union line had an advantage in that they were armed with newly issued Spencer carbine repeaters.

When Thomas observed a large gap open as the two forward infantry corps veered away from each other, he ordered Schofield's XXIII Corps to fill the space between them and add its weight to the attack.

Hood reinforces wavering flank

Hood ordered Major General Edward Johnson's Division of Lieutenant General SD Lee's corps in the centre to reinforce the left flank when he saw that it was the target of the Union army's main attack. The first two brigades to arrive deployed on the south end of Stewart's line where they were desperately needed to prevent his flank from being turned.

Smith attacked Redoubts No. 4 and No. 5 with overwhelming force. Dismounted troopers of the 2nd Iowa Cavalry with their repeating carbines spearheaded the attack on Redoubt No. 5 and were assisted by Smith's infantrymen. After a brief melee inside the redoubt, the surviving Confederates retreated to the main line along the Hillsboro Pike. The combined force of the 5th Cavalry Division and elements of the Union IV Corps captured Redoubt No. 4 shortly afterwards.

As Colonel Sylvester Hill of Smith's Corps prepared to lead his infantry brigade in a charge to capture Redoubt No. 3, his commanding officer, Brigadier General John McArthur, advised him to wait for additional troops to support him. Hill ignored the general's advice. "Our brigade will go right up there," Hill told Smith. "Nothing can stop them."

Although his men captured the redoubt, a Rebel marksman shot Hill in the head, killing him as he was preparing to lead his troops in a charge against Redoubt No. 2. Angered by Hill's death, Colonel William Marshal, the commander of the 7th Minnesota regiment, led his 200 men in a spirited charge that so intimidated the Confederates in Redoubt No. 2 that they fled without putting up any resistance.

The riflemen of Johnson's two advance brigades on the far end of Stewart's line found themselves under heavy artillery fire

"ALTOGETHER, HOOD HAD LOST NEARLY ONE-THIRD OF HIS ARMY IN THE BLOODY BATTLES AT FRANKLIN AND NASHVILLE"

from the rifled Union guns. With the shells exploding among them, these troops fell back unexpectedly. "These Rebels appeared panic-stricken and fired badly," said a Union officer whose troops had exchanged fire with them.

The rout of Johnson's advance brigades triggered the collapse of Stewart's entire line at 4pm. Stewart ordered his division commanders to reform their troops nearly a mile east along the Granny White Pike. Complete disaster was diverted not only by the arrival on the Confederate left of Johnson's two remaining brigades, but also by the arrival of 1,500 more troops from Cheatham's corps that Hood had hurried to the point of crisis. Nightfall put an end to the fighting.

Union officers in the US Army's telegraph office in Washington on December 15 received a message late that night from Thomas stating that his troops had driven back the enemy from one to three miles over the course of the day's fighting. "The whole action of today was splendidly successful," wrote Thomas.

Confederates shorten the line

Hood's army, which already was at a great disadvantage, was extremely low on manpower by the end of the day on 15 December. Hood had suffered 2,200 killed, wounded and captured on the first day of the battle. Thomas and his corps commanders had every confidence that they would crush Hood's weakened army if he offered battle again on the following day.

True to his nature, Hood intended to stand his ground because at that point he had few strategic options remaining. He believed that he could still bleed the Union army if his troops could hold a contracted line that stretched for 3km from Shy's Hill on the west to Overton Hill on the east.

In preparation to receive a renewed Union assault on the following morning, Hood placed Stewart's badly battered corps in the centre. The Confederates held strong positions on fortified hilltops on each flank. Cheatham's corps deployed on the left side of the Confederate battle line atop Shy's Hill, and SD Lee's corps took up positions on Overton Hill on the right side.

Union troops rout Confederates

Thomas opened his attack the following day by sending elements of Wood's IV Corps against Major General Carter Stevenson's Division of SD Lee's corps atop Overton Hill. The Union troops advanced at the enemy in three ranks. Well-entrenched Confederate troops backed up by massed Confederate artillery repulsed Wood's attack. Next, Thomas ordered Steedman's Colored Troops to assail the hill at midday, but this second attack also floundered in the face of determined Confederate resistance.

Union attacks, some ordered by Thomas and some spontaneous, occurred along the entire length of the Confederate position in the late afternoon. When Union troops from the XVI and XXIII corps attacked Cheatham's men on Shy's Hill at 4pm, his troops could not hold them off. At the same time, Wilson's cavalry rode around Cheatham's flank. At that point, the Southern troops on the left and centre fled towards Franklin Pike. Realising he was defeated, Hood ordered a general retreat south along the Franklin Pike.

Hood suffered 1,500 killed and wounded, as well as 8,500 captured in the two-day battle. Altogether, he had lost nearly one-third of his army in the bloody battles at Franklin and Nashville. Although Thomas suffered 3,000 casualties at Nashville, his much larger army could more easily afford the losses. On 18 December Grant telegraphed his congratulations to Thomas for what he called a "great victory".

Forrest ambushes Union pursuers

The Union pursuit of the retreating Confederate army began immediately. Hood sent orders to Forrest to cover his retreat. The 'Wizard of the Saddle', as Forrest was known, carried out a series of well-laid ambushes that bought Hood the time he needed to get the rump of his army to safety. Even so, Union troops leading the pursuit rounded up thousands of Confederates who were too weary to keep up with the main body.

By 26 December the Army of Tennessee had succeeded in crossing the Tennessee River. Of the 37,000 Confederate troops that had set out for Nashville in late November, only 20,000 remained when it reassembled in northeastern Mississippi. Davis sacked Hood in January 1865.

Through careful planning and skilful handling of his forces, Thomas had eviscerated the Army of Tennessee and it played no significant part in the remainder of the war.

This photo shows the inner line of Union Army defences at the Battle of Nashville

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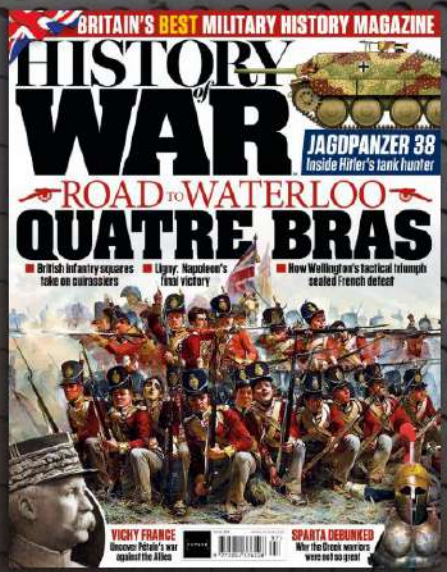
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Lieutenant Colonel Bernard Freyberg won the Victoria Cross while leading his men in an attack on Beaucourt on 13 November 1916

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"THE PERSONALITY, VALOUR AND UTTER CONTEMPT OF DANGER ON THE PART OF THIS SINGLE OFFICER ENABLED THE LODGEMENT IN THE MOST ADVANCED OBJECTIVE OF THE CORPS TO BE PERMANENTLY HELD"

Freyberg's citation in the *London Gazette* on 15 December 1916

Heroes of the Victoria Cross

BERNARD FREYBERG

In the closing days of the Battle of the Somme, this Lieutenant Colonel gallantly led his men to take the heavily defended village of Beaucourt, despite being wounded multiple times

WORDS **ANTHONY TUCKER-JONES**

At 7.20am on 1 July 1916 the Battle of the Somme commenced when the British detonated a large mine under a German strongpoint defending the village of Beaumont-Hamel. The British offensive was designed to relieve pressure on the beleaguered French Army at Verdun. In addition, according to General Sir William Robertson, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, its second objective was to inflict heavy losses on the German forces. A further 16 mines were detonated before the Allies went over the top. General Beauvoir de Lisle's 29th 'Incomparable' Division led the attack at Beaumont-Hamel and they were mown down before the Redan Ridge. The British Army suffered 57,470 casualties that day.

Beaumont-Hamel was not taken until 13 November, by the 51st (Highland) Division during the Battle of Ancre. On that very day Lieutenant Colonel Bernard Freyberg, of the Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment, commanding Hood Battalion, won the Victoria Cross during the attack on neighbouring Beaucourt. Freyberg's unit formed part of the 63rd (Royal Naval) Division which had been created in 1914 at the instigation of Winston Churchill, who at the time was First Lord of the Admiralty. Although it included a brigade of Royal Marines its other two brigades comprised of army battalions. Freyberg's command was part of the 188th Brigade, along with the suitably nautically named Drake, Hawke and Nelson battalions, deployed on the immediate right of the 51st Division. Their task was to pierce the deep German defences to the southeast of Beaumont-Hamel. The 51st and 63rd Divisions formed part of Lieutenant General EA Fanshawe's 5th Corps.

Freyberg first came to prominence at Gallipoli during the ill-fated landings in the Dardanelles, where he served with the Hood Battalion. He had bravely swam ashore, 3km out from a boat, to light signal flares on the beach to distract fire from the Royal Naval Division on the night of 24 April 1915. This gained him his first Distinguished Service Order. Historian BH Liddell Hart wrote: "His feat, and its effect, was an outstanding proof that in war it is the

© Getty

Freyberg and his men faced a sea of tangled barbed-wire and mud at Beaucourt

man, and not men, who count – that one man can be more useful than a thousand." Freyberg was described as "huge, handsome with keen grey eyes". After his division was evacuated, although he transferred to the Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment, he deployed to France to take charge of his old battalion. The Queen's battalions ended up deployed with the 7th, 12th, 18th, 24th, 33rd and 41st Divisions on the Somme.

The 63rd Division achieved some tactical surprise at Beaucourt as the Germans were complacent, believing that their well-prepared positions were impregnable. The morning mist also helped the attackers as German artillery struggled to effectively support their forward positions. The greatest challenge facing Freyberg and his men was the sea of mud and vast water-filled craters. General Sir Douglas Haig, Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force, noted: "The country roads, broken by countless shell craters, that crossed the deep stretch of ground we had lately won, rapidly became almost impassable, making the supply of food, stores and ammunition a serious problem."

When the advance was signalled Freyberg and his men struggled through the morass of no-man's land. The clatter of machine guns soon announced that the Germans were not going to give ground easily. Although barbed wire cutting parties preceded Freyberg and the shelling had also severed the wire, it remained intact in many places. Freyberg's battalion became disorganised crossing the German frontline trenches, weakening and slowing his advance.

> **"PROBABLY THE MOST DISTINGUISHED PERSONAL ACT OF THE WAR"**
>
> **General de Lisle**
> **Commander of the 29th Division**

He rallied his men and led an assault on the Germans' second line, during which he was hit by enemy fire twice. During the next day and night his battalion hung on to their gains but were in desperate need of reinforcements. When these finally arrived Freyberg led the next assault, taking Beaucourt along with 500 German prisoners. Beaucourt's large mill had been reduced to a shattered and derelict ruin and the miller's adjacent house, its roof smashed in, had all but collapsed. To add to the melancholy air, the surrounding trees, although still standing, had been shorn of most of their branches by heavy shelling.

The capture of Beaucourt and Beaumont-Hamel by 5th Corps were the most notable gains of the Battle of Ancre, which made Freyberg's decisive leadership even more important. In the bitter fighting for the village he was wounded a further two times. However, Freyberg refused to be evacuated until he had issued his final orders to his remaining men and secured Beaucourt. When he arrived at the causality station his injuries were such that he was assessed to be terminal and placed in a tent with other men who were expected to die. He was not treated except for pain killers, but when he didn't succumb to his wounds he was operated on and survived.

A second VC was won on 13 November by Private John Cunningham, 12th Battalion, East Yorkshire Regiment, which formed part of the 31st Division. His unit was involved in the attacks on a German trench to the north of Beaumont-Hamel near Hebuterne. When his bombing party were all killed or wounded he proceeded to clear the enemy communication trench on his own. He even returned to British lines to collect fresh bombs. Cunningham successfully moved forward to the next enemy position and in the process single handedly killed ten Germans.

The wounded Freyberg had one small consolation: he was spared being at the front

© Alamy

The ruined mill at Beaucourt. By the time the village was secured Freyberg had been wounded four times

over the winter of 1916-17. British commanders had hoped to exploit the success at Beaumont-Hamel and Beaucourt but the terrible conditions made that impossible. Snow squalls and icy winds began to sweep the devastated landscape, and the onset of winter rapidly brought the bloodletting to a halt. A German soldier serving with the 111th Infantry Reserve Regiment lamented: "Our losses are dreadful. And now we have bad weather again, so that anyone who is not wounded falls ill."

When the Battle of the Somme finally came to a close on 18 November 1916 the British had suffered 419,654 casualties and the French 204,253. The Germans lost something in the region of 500,000. In four-and-a-half months of fighting the Allies had advanced on average 8km on a 23km front. "Britain, up to the Battle of the Somme, had not lost men on the same scale as the rest of the belligerents," wrote Prime Minister David Lloyd George. "But by the end of 1916 her losses were greater than those she had sustained in the aggregate in all her wars put together since the Wars of the Roses, and had cost more than all the wars she had ever waged."

After recovering, Freyberg saw further action in 1917 and 1918. As well as his VC he also won three Distinguished Service Orders during the First World War. After the conflict he continued his distinguished military career: in the Second World War he commanded the 2nd New Zealand Division in North Africa, then Allied forces on Crete in 1941, and finally the New Zealand Corps in Italy in 1944. Afterwards he served as the Governor General of New Zealand from 1946-52 and then Deputy Constable and Lieutenant Governor of Windsor Castle, 1953-63.

British infantry picking their way through the wire: this was always one of the most dangerous times during an attack

★ INFERNAL MACHINES ★

SUBMARINES AND THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

In a conflict where several technologies were used for the first time on the battlefield and elsewhere, these hazardous inventions formed some of the earliest attempts to take war beneath the waves

WORDS **CLIVE WEBB**

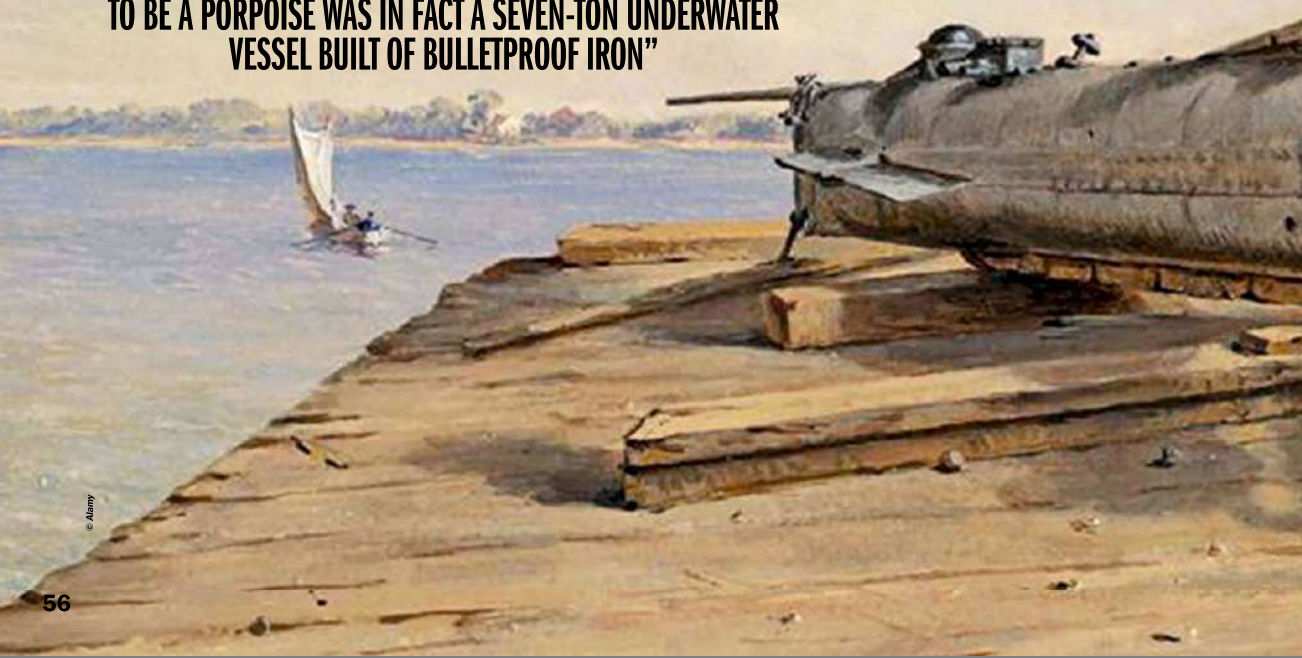
'Strike, mad vessel! Shower your useless shot! And then, you will not escape the spur of the Nautilus!' So utters a vengeful Captain Nemo in *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Seas*, Jules Verne's classic science fiction novel of 1870. The submarine under his command, the Nautilus, is a wondrous creation. Electrically powered, it boasts a library of 12,000 books, a dining room and a pipe organ played by the mysterious seafarer. As Nemo demonstrates, the 'spur of the Nautilus' can also send any craft to the depths of the sea.

Fantastic as Verne's creation is, the submarine was already a matter of fact by the time he wrote his fictional work. Although less sophisticated than the Nautilus, engineers had only a few years earlier pioneered the use of underwater vessels for both defensive and offensive purposes during the American Civil War. And, before the Nautilus voyaged through the imaginations of readers, one of these submarines had for the first time in military history successfully sunk an enemy ship.

The concept of the submarine dates back much earlier than the American Civil War. British mathematician William Bourne formulated plans for a submersible vessel in the late 17th century; Dutch inventor Cornelis Drebbel went further by constructing a prototype submarine which dived beneath the River Thames in 1620 to the wonder of spectators including King James I. American engineer Robert Fulton also tested a submersible named Nautilus (the name later taken by Jules Verne) in France, but could not persuade a sceptical Napoleon Bonaparte of its military potential.

Napoleon might not have been convinced but the first attempted combat use of a submarine had already taken place, during the American Revolutionary War. In the early morning of

"WHAT THE PERPLEXED DESK OFFICER HAD FIRST THOUGHT TO BE A PORPOISE WAS IN FACT A SEVEN-TON UNDERWATER VESSEL BUILT OF BULLETPROOF IRON"



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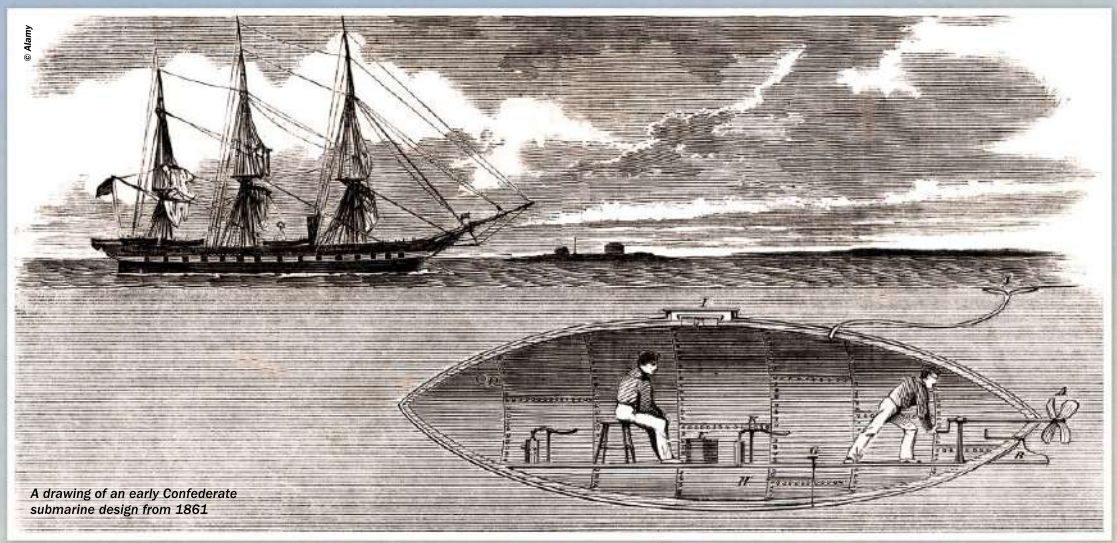
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A drawing of an early Confederate submarine design from 1861

7 September 1776, army volunteer Ezra Lee piloted an oval-shaped wooden vessel named the Turtle underneath the British flagship HMS Eagle, but failed to force the Turtle's explosive into the enemy ship's hull.

Lincoln's submarines

The American Civil War of 1861-65 was nonetheless a watershed in the technological advancement and combat application of submarines. The conflict was determined on land in some of the most famous battles in military history, yet the advancement of submarine technology shows how one development in warfare begets further innovation. The Civil War witnessed the first military action of ironclads, which succeeded the wooden ships of earlier wars. No sooner had the Union and Confederacy launched these seemingly invulnerable vessels, than both sides started to devise the means to sink them. 'These infernal machines,' as they came to be known, offer an inspiring but cautionary tale about both the strengths and limitations of humankind's efforts to overcome the forces of nature.

The competition between the Union and the Confederacy to construct a submarine resulted in losses and wins for both sides. On 13 June 1862, the Union Navy accepted a submersible vessel named the Alligator for military service. The submarine was based on a design by the French engineer Brutus de Villeroi.

De Villeroi was a flamboyant character. Following his move to the United States, he listed his occupation as 'natural genius'. The aristocratic 'de' in his name was also an affectation. There has even been speculation that he once taught Jules Verne, and like Robert Fulton helped inspire the fictional Nautilus. What we do know is that clashes between navy

The Hunley sank in 1864 during its successful attack on the Union vessel Housatonic. This drawing of the submarine is from 1902

officials and the temperamental Frenchman eventually led to his dismissal from the daring construction project.

"I propose to you, a new arm of war, as formidable as it is economical," Villeroi had earlier written to President Lincoln. However, the submarine built at the Philadelphia Navy Yard honoured neither commitment.

The Alligator was 14 metres long, with a crew of 18. The machine relied on human muscle for movement, first by paddles and later a hand-cranked propeller that maximised its speed to four knots. Among its most important innovations were an air purification system. The Alligator also boasted an airlock intended to allow divers to leave the vessel to attach mines to the hull of enemy surface ships and return to the safety of the submarine.

Numerous missions were proposed for the navy's new underwater weapon. Yet for a number of practical reasons, not least insufficient water depth for it to dive, the Alligator undertook none of them. Eventually it was decided to use the submarine in support of a naval assault on the harbour defences in Charleston, South Carolina.

On 31 March 1863, a wooden steamer towed the crewless Alligator along the Potomac River out of Washington and into the Atlantic Ocean. Two days later, as the steamer travelled along the North Carolina coast, weather conditions took a serious turn for the worse. When the port towline snapped, the submarine pitched on the swelling waves and started taking on water. Realising that the Alligator could also take down his boat, the steamer captain took the only course of action and cut the submarine adrift. It sank without a trace. The Union assault on Charleston ended in failure.

Northern inventors persisted during the rest of the war with submarine design and assembly. Their creations, including the Intelligent Whale and the Explorer, nevertheless remained incomplete by April 1865 when the Union claimed victory over the Confederacy. Nor were their eventual trials a success.

The Confederacy sub

While the Union continued to conduct work on submarines, it was the Confederacy that most successfully demonstrated the potential of the vessels. On the evening of 17 February 1864, the USS Housatonic stood anchored in calm moonlit waters off the coast of Charleston. The sloop-of-war was one of the Union ships enforcing a blockade of southern ports. Like the snake after which it was named, the Anaconda Plan had the purpose of cutting off the lifeblood of the Confederate economy, rendering it unable to export the cotton needed for hard currency or import essential supplies.

At 8:45pm desk officer John Crosby saw astern the Housatonic what he later described to a court of inquiry as: "Something on the water, which at first looked to me like a porpoise coming to the surface to blow." As it came closer, however, Crosby realised this was no shy harbour animal and he sounded the alarm.

Captain Charles Pickering fired several musket shots that did nothing to stop the object's approach. Suddenly, there was an explosion in the ship's starboard quarter. It took only eight minutes from Crosby's first sighting to

★ CSS HUNLEY ★

Constructed by the firm Park and Lyons in Mobile, Alabama, Hunley was the brainchild of Horace L Hunley, a lawyer, planter and innovator from New Orleans. Other experiments had been disappointing, but the Hunley design was believed workable, even after two trial deployments ended in tragedies that cost the lives 13 men, including Horace Hunley.

Under control of the Confederate Army, Hunley slipped beneath the harbour waters in Charleston, South Carolina, that fateful night on 17 February 1864 and proceeded towards a cluster of US Navy warships blockading the major Confederate seaport. Under the command of Lieutenant George E Dixon, the crew of eight steered toward the 16-gun sloop of war USS Housatonic patrolling 6km off the harbour mouth. The Hunley carried a single torpedo attached to a five-metre spar, and its mission was to shove it into the enemy ship below the waterline, inflicting a mortal wound.

In the murky darkness, Hunley crept closer to Housatonic, finally ramming the torpedo home. The resulting explosion sent Housatonic to the bottom in five minutes. However, Hunley failed to return, its crew slipping to a watery grave – probably due to the same explosion that doomed Housatonic. In 2017 researchers speculated that Hunley's crew were killed or incapacitated by the shockwave from the blast.

SPAR AND TORPEDO

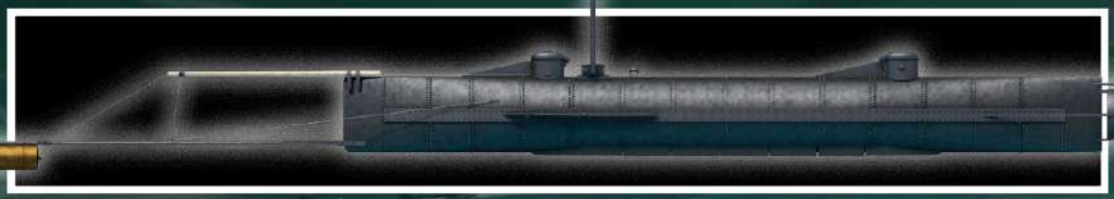
Hunley's five-metre spar was tipped with a torpedo filled with black powder, expected to produce a catastrophic explosion after being rammed into the hull of a Union warship below the waterline. The weapon worked during the attack on the US Navy sloop of war Housatonic, but Hunley did not survive its only combat mission, probably disabled by the same explosion that sank Housatonic on the night of 17 February 1864.

INTERNAL BALLAST TANKS

Hunley was fitted with ballast tanks both at the bow and the stern to provide additional weight for submersion and to assist the submarine in remaining on an even keel. These tanks could be flooded by manually opening valves and were pumped dry by hand to lighten the submarine, which weighed seven and a half short tons.

EMERGENCY IRON WEIGHTS

Large iron weights were bolted directly to the external hull of Hunley and were intended to be jettisoned in the event of an emergency that required the submarine to surface rapidly. To remove the weights, the crewmen were to unscrew the bolt heads from inside Hunley. However, the procedure was inherently risky given the probable dearth of light – perhaps from only a burning candle – and the necessity of rapid execution.



VENTILATION
A pair of snorkels were attached to Hunley's hull just abaft of the forward conning tower. These could be raised and lowered as needed. Along with an accompanying bellows system installed just behind the commander's position, the snorkels were used to pump fresh air into the crew compartment, which otherwise would run out of oxygen within a short time as heat or cold became debilitating.

CONNING TOWERS, HATCHES
Hunley was constructed with a pair of small but prominent conning towers located fore and aft that offered limited visibility when the submarine was underway. The conning towers were also equipped with hatches for crew ingress and egress. Although the hatches were quite narrow, measuring only 420mm wide and 530mm long, researches were surprised to discover that they were somewhat larger than had been originally believed.

EXTERNAL DIVE PLANES
External dive planes, shaped like wings, were attached to the starboard and port sides of Hunley's hull. These were manipulated by the commander, angling them upward or downward to control the depth of the submarine while underway. During an exploratory dive in 1995, a portion of Hunley was cleared of silt, exposing the dive plane on the port side of the submarine and yielding a preliminary measurement of Hunley's length at 11 metres.

PROPELLER AND RUDDER
The hand-cranked propeller of Hunley turned at the speed generated by the crew's exertion, and operating the crank was backbreaking work. The propeller was protected by an external iron ring and was offset to the starboard side of the submarine. The rudder was located at the rear of the submarine and answered the helm, steering Hunley through the murky waters of Charleston harbour during its fateful mission.

DEAD LIGHTS
Once the crew of eight men had occupied Hunley, the interior of the submarine was cramped and dark. A series of 'dead lights' was installed atop the spine of the submarine to provide as much ambient light as possible, facilitating the work of the crew with wrenches and other tools that were used to make Hunley watertight and allow entry and exit.

COMMANDER'S POSITION
Lieutenant George E Dixon took the Hunley helm forward of the lead conning tower, where the steering controls were located. Dixon, originally an infantry officer, had been wounded at Shiloh in April 1862, a Union bullet glancing off a $20 gold piece in his pocket, likely saving his life. Dixon had the coin inscribed and kept it as a good luck piece. In 2002, it was found between clothing folds as his remains were examined.

CREW COMPARTMENT
The eight members of the Hunley crew consisted of the commander, first officer, and six enlisted men. The crew compartment included a bench to accommodate seven men as they turned a hand crank to provide propulsion for the submarine. The first officer's position was in the stern, adjacent to the aft conning tower. From there, he was able to assist with the propulsion of the submarine, which was capable of moving through the water at a speed of approximately four knots.

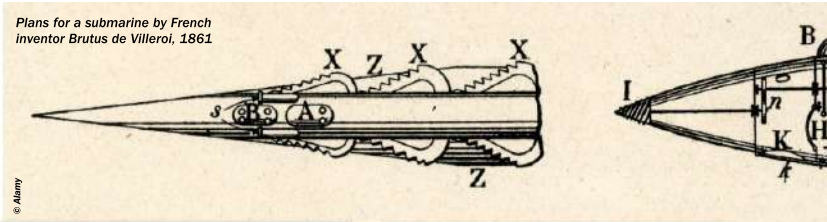
the Housatonic sinking. The situation was so frantic that some of the crew rushed naked from their bunks before throwing themselves overboard. Less fortunate still were the five men who lost their lives.

What the perplexed desk officer had first thought to be a porpoise was in fact a seven-ton underwater vessel built of bulletproof iron. Constructed at a cost of $15,000 in private funds, the HL Hunley bore little resemblance to the submarines of today. The 'fish boat', as it was at first known, was 12 metres long. Seven of its crew turned a crank to power the propeller, toiling in cramped and humid conditions while an eighth man steered. A pair of diving fins manipulated the pressure of oncoming water to allow the vessel to submerge and surface.

The HL Hunley was actually the third submarine constructed by the Confederacy. In February 1862, a private consortium in New Orleans successfully tested the Pioneer, a ten-metre submarine, in the Mississippi River. The advance of Union forces on the city two months later, which culminated in its capture and occupation, compelled the inventors to abandon development and scuttle the vessel in a shipping canal.

Relocating to Mobile, Alabama, the team constructed a second submarine, the American Diver. Their experiments with electromagnetic propulsion were a failure, however, and the vessel proved powerless to withstand rough waters caused by bad weather, sinking in the bay where it was tested.

Undeterred, the engineers conceived and constructed a third vessel. Named after the cotton broker who headed the consortium, the HL Hunley was beset by misfortune. Transported by rail from Mobile to Charleston, it sank during a test on 29 August 1863 having accidentally dived with the top hatches still open. Five of the eight crewmen drowned. During a second test on 15 October the vessel successfully dived underneath the CSS



Plans for a submarine by French inventor Brutus de Villeroi, 1861

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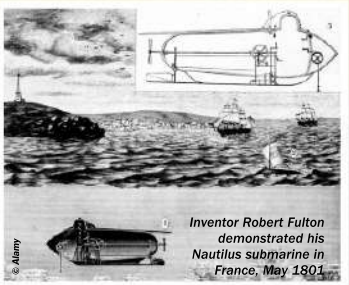
The wreck of the Hunley submarine was raised intact in 2000

© Alamy



Inventor Robert Fulton demonstrated his Nautilus submarine in France, May 1801

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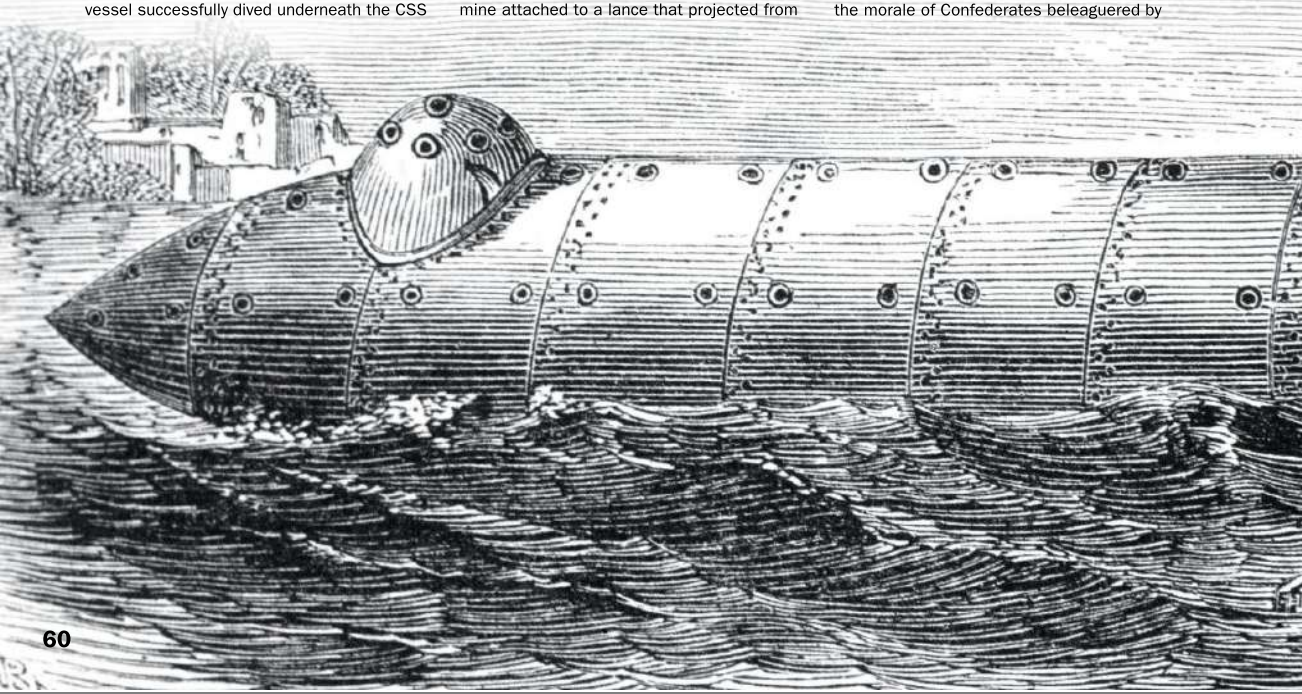
"THE HUNLEY'S FIRST SUCCESSFUL MISSION WAS ALSO ITS LAST"

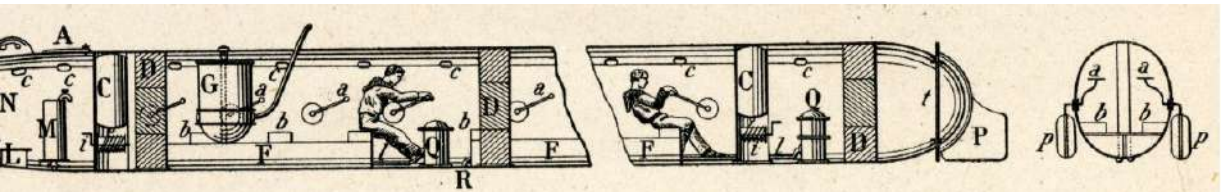
Indian Chief, a ship for newly recruited sailors anchored in the Cooper River. Demonstrating that what goes down does not always come up, it failed to resurface. All of the men aboard including Hunley, who was captaining the submarine, lost their lives.

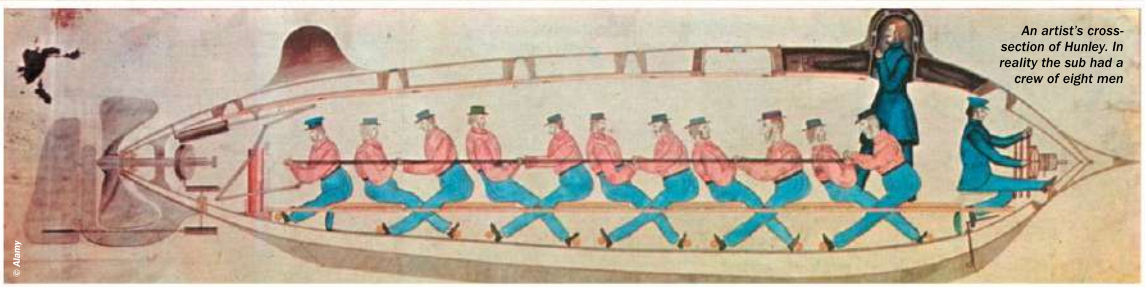
The Hunley's attack on the Housatonic was more daring than anything tried during its test dives. The weapon with which it sank the sloop-of-war was a spar torpedo – a naval mine attached to a lance that projected from the bow of the submarine. To detonate the warhead, the Hunley needed to ram it into a target. As the submarine reversed, a line attached to the fuse would pull tight and set off the torpedo.

In theory, this would only happen once the Hunley had retreated to a safe distance. However, in reality the blast that sank the Housatonic also seems to have caused the Hunley to suffer the same fate. Although there is still some speculation over why the submarine never returned to base, its crew all died while still at their stations. The Hunley's first successful mission was also its last. Marine archaeologists eventually raised the wreck to the surface in 2000.

The sinking of the Housatonic briefly lifted the morale of Confederates beleaguered by







An artist's cross-section of Hunley. In reality the sub had a crew of eight men

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the Union blockade. "This glorious success of our little torpedo boat," proclaimed the *Charleston Daily Courier*, "has raised the hopes of our people, and the most sanguine expectations are now entertained of our being able to raise the siege in a way little dreamed of by the enemy."

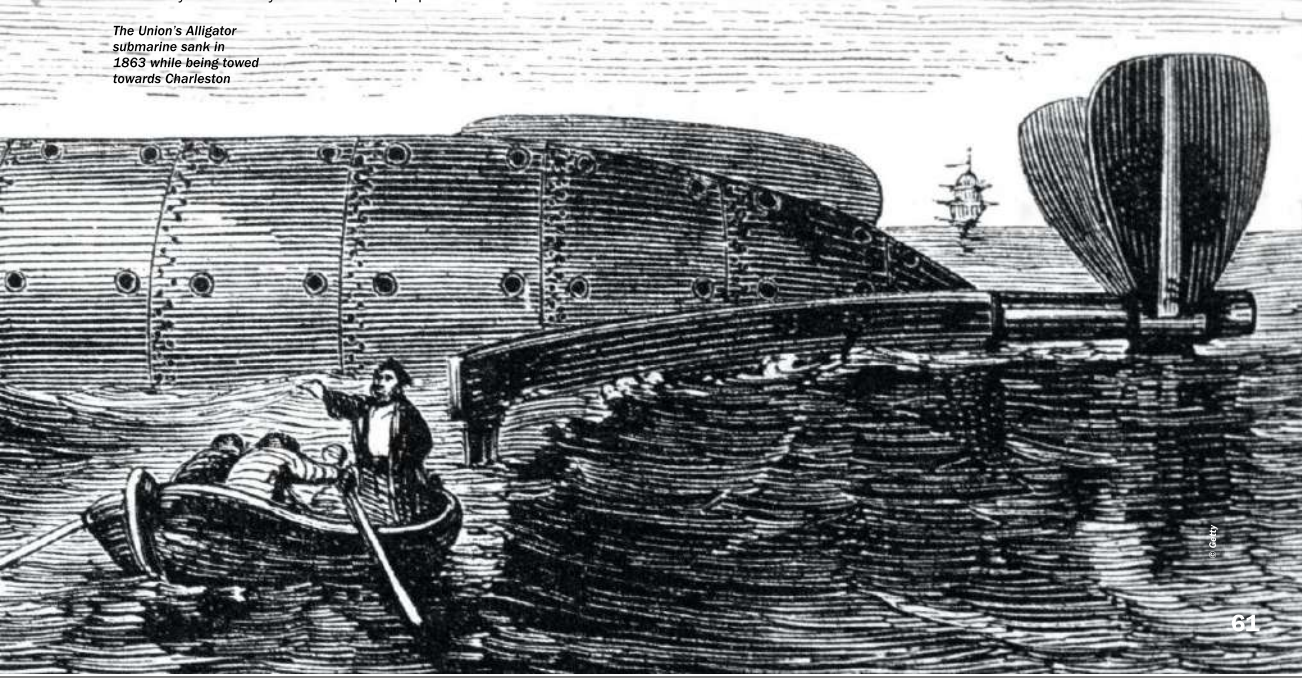
Union forces on the contrary fretted that the new underwater menace could break the blockade that had helped bring the Confederate economy, and its people, close to collapse. Rear Admiral John Dahlgren, who commanded the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron, feared a "series of disasters" and recommended offering a reward for information that led to the seizure or destruction of Confederate submarines. US Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles proposed the additional patrolling of southern harbours by small steamers.

These fears proved unfounded. Confederate hopes that the submarine could provide salvation from the Union blockade sank along with the Hunley. Others, however, had not abandoned faith in submersible craft. While both sides in the American Civil War had pioneered the use of submarines, other countries including France and Russia were simultaneously conducting tests on new vessels of their own.

On 16 April 1863, the French Navy launched Le Plongeur ('The Diver'), the world's first mechanically propelled submarine. In July 1865, the *Messager du Midi* newspaper in Montpellier boasted of a submersible launched in Toulon that "thanks to the new infernal machine, we shall be able to dispense with all dykes, batteries and other odd expedients hitherto employed for the defence of the ports and roads of the empire". With a touch of Jules Verne about it, the paper claimed that the submarine was armed with an "electric spark" able to destroy anything "with the rapidity of lightning". Despite this claim, it would take another 23 years for the French navy to launch its first active submarine, the Gymnote.

The submarines developed during this era were almost as ahead of their time as anything imagined by Jules Verne. It would take half a century before the U-boat became an integral component of the German campaign during the First World War. In an echo of history, during January 1917 a German submarine sank a US merchant vessel named the Housatonic.

The Union's Alligator submarine sank in 1863 while being towed towards Charleston



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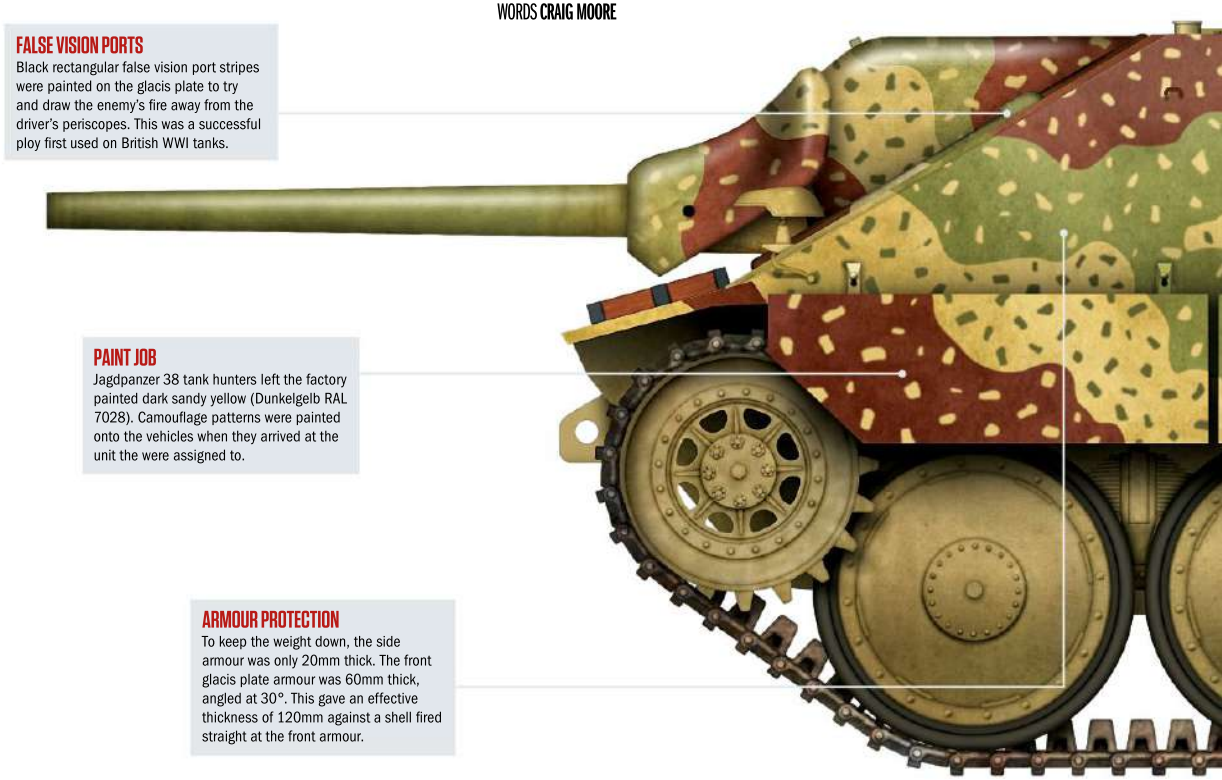
JAGDPANZ

Over 2,800 'Hetzers' were produced between March 1944 and May 1945, and they became among the most successful tank hunters of the war

WORDS **CRAIG MOORE**



FALSE VISION PORTS
Black rectangular false vision port stripes were painted on the glacis plate to try and draw the enemy's fire away from the driver's periscopes. This was a successful ploy first used on British WWI tanks.

PAINT JOB
Jagdpanzer 38 tank hunters left the factory painted dark sandy yellow (Dunkelgelb RAL 7028). Camouflage patterns were painted onto the vehicles when they arrived at the unit the were assigned to.

ARMOUR PROTECTION
To keep the weight down, the side armour was only 20mm thick. The front glacis plate armour was 60mm thick, angled at 30°. This gave an effective thickness of 120mm against a shell fired straight at the front armour.

The Jagdpanzer 38 'Hetzer' tank hunter is a very misunderstood self-propelled anti-tank gun. For a start, it was not officially called the Hetzer during World War II. Deriving from the German hunting term 'hetzen', meaning to hunt your prey at high speed until it collapses or is caught, only a handful of official wartime documents used the nickname Hetzer.

At a January 1944 meeting between German army ordnance officers and the Czech BMM factory, the internal project name Hetzer was wrongly assigned to the Jagdpanzer 38 due to a misunderstanding.

In reality, the Jagdpanzer 38 was a slow vehicle and could not chase enemy tanks. Instead, it was a long-range ambush weapon designed to be used in defence or to protect the flanks of an attack from an enemy counterattack. It was not designed to be used at the front of an attack. In addition, Jagdpanzer 38s ordinarily hunted in packs rather than fighting as solitary killers. Although the main gun had a limited traverse left and right, four to six vehicles hidden in the edge of a wood or hedgerow could cover a large area.

ZER 38

© Getty

JAGDPANZER 38

COMMISSIONED:	1944
ORIGIN:	GERMANY, BUT BUILT IN THE PROTECTORATE OF BOHEMIA AND MORAVIA (CZECH REPUBLIC)
LENGTH:	6.27M (20FT 6.8IN)
RANGE:	180KM (111 MILES)
ENGINE:	PRAGA EPA AC 2800 6-CYLINDER 158 HP PETROL ENGINE
CREW:	4
ARMOUR:	8MM TO 60MM
PRIMARY WEAPON:	7.5CM PAK 39 L/4
SECONDARY WEAPON:	7.92MM M.G.34 MACHINE GUN

Illustration: Battlefield Design

FACTORY CAMOUFLAGE

From October 1944, Jagdpanzer 38s were painted in a camouflage pattern before they left the BMM factory. It had a base colour of Dunkelgelb with stripes and patches of dark red-brown (Rotbraun RAL8017) and dark olive green (Olivgrün RAL6003).

"IT WAS A LONG-RANGE AMBUSH WEAPON DESIGNED TO BE USED IN DEFENCE OR TO PROTECT THE FLANKS OF AN ATTACK FROM AN ENEMY COUNTERATTACK"

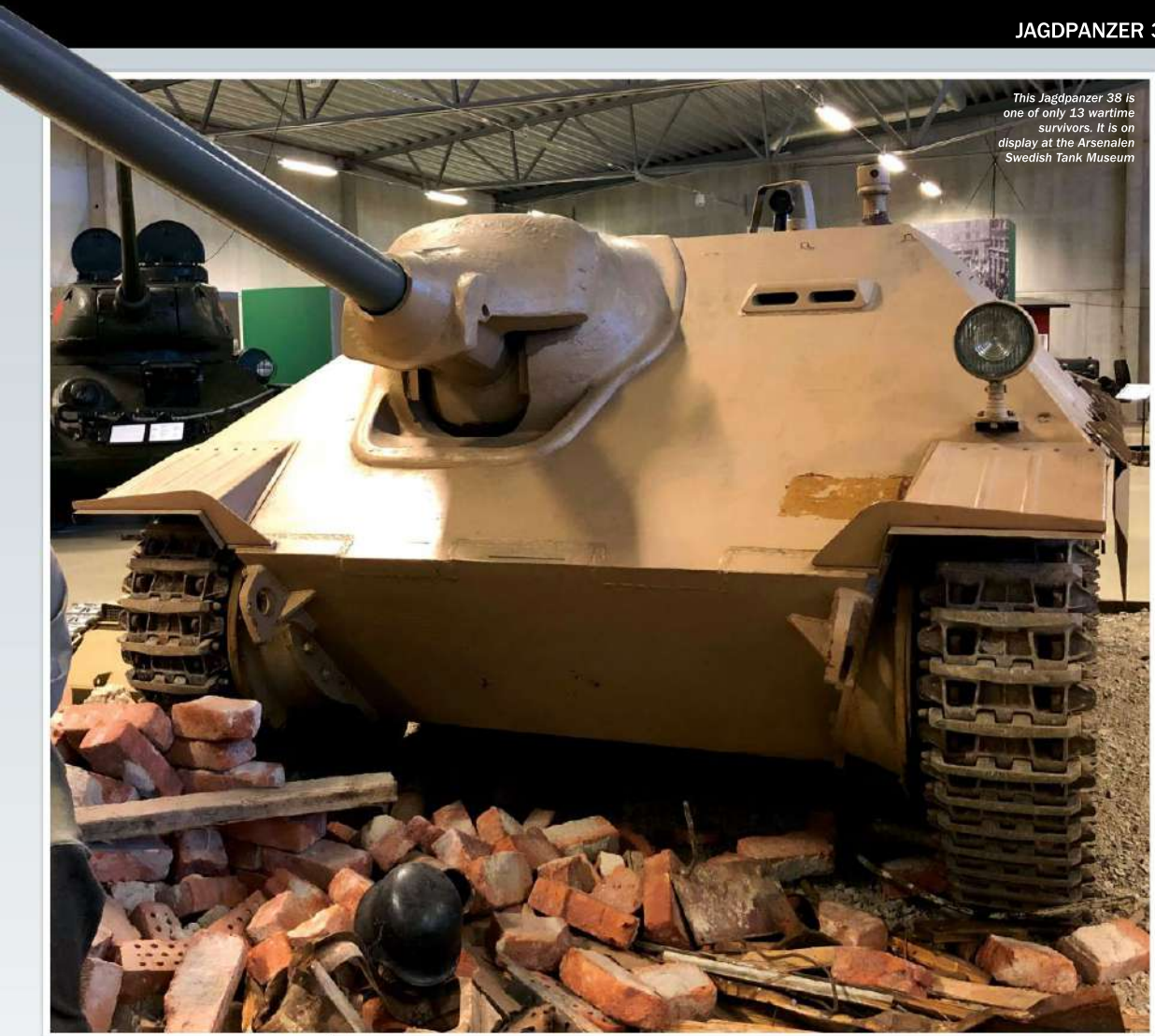
ARMAMENT

The Jagdpanzer 38 was equipped with the 7.5cm Panzerjägerkanone 39 L/48 (7.5cm Pak 39 L/48) anti-tank gun. The German word 'Panzerjägerkanone' translates as 'tank hunter gun' (anti-tank gun). It was an electrically fired weapon fitted with a semi-automatic breech mechanism and a 48 calibre long barrel. It could penetrate the armour of most common Allied tanks at ranges up to 1km. The tank's loader also had the job of rearming and firing the remote-controlled roof-mounted 360° swivelling 7.92mm M.G.34 machinegun.

The tank's loader fired the roof-mounted machine gun by using the two handles to aim it at the target

This is the 75mm Pak 39 L/48 anti-tank gun breech of the Jagdpanzer 38 at the Arsenalen Swedish Tank Museum

The front armour was interlocked for added strength. You can see the welds on this Jagdpanzer 38 at the Swiss Panzermuseum



This Jagdpanzer 38 is one of only 13 wartime survivors. It is on display at the Arsenalen Swedish Tank Museum

DESIGN

Allied bombing affected the production of the Sturmgeschütz III assault gun. There was spare capacity at the BMM/CKD and Škoda factories near Prague, but their factory cranes could not lift the weight of a completed Sturmgeschütz III. The factories had produced the Panzer 38(t) tank. A light tank hunter design, armed with a 75cm Pak 39 gun using an extended Panzer 38(t) hull, its tried and tested suspension and reliable mechanical parts was accepted and production started in March 1944.

All images © Arsenalen Tank Museum unless otherwise stated

ENGINE

The Jagdpanzer 38 was powered by a Praga EPA AC 2800 6-cylinder 158hp petrol engine. It was very similar to the one used in the Panzer 38(t) tank but had been uprated. Instead of producing 129hp, it now produced 158hp. The engine was connected to a five-speed Praga-Wilson transmission, which was in turn connected to a planetary steering system. Its top road speed was 40km/h (24.9mph). The production vehicle weighed 16 tonnes rather than the proposed 13 tonnes, which affected the vehicle's speed.

The early exhaust system had the pipe coming down the back of the vehicle into a tubular silencer box

***Right:** This is the Praga EPA AC 2800 6-cylinder 158hp petrol engine fitted in the Jagdpanzer at the Arsenalen Swedish Tank Museum*

THE VEHICLE PICTURED IS A JAGDPANZER 38 BELONGING TO ARSENALEN TANK MUSEUM
WWW.ARSENALEN.SE

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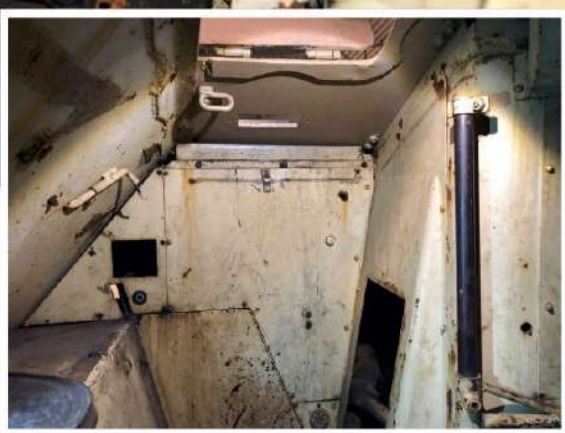
CREW COMPARTMENT

The Jagdpanzer 38 gun mount was fixed to the glacis plate. The gun was installed off-centre, to the right of the vehicle. This enabled the driver, gunner and loader's positions to be on the left side of the vehicle, in line, one behind the other. The commander sat on the right side of the vehicle, at the rear of the fighting compartment, directly behind the gun, with his hatch above him. He did not have access to an armoured cupola.



Above: *The Jagdpanzer 38 driver's position was on the left-side of the gun. The gunner and loader sat immediately behind him*

Left: *The commander sat at the rear-right and poked scissor periscopes out of his hatch during combat. He had a rear-facing periscope*

SERVICE HISTORY

From 20 June 1944, the German tank hunting training schools started to receive Jagdpanzer 38s. Crews were taught to find preselected firing positions, preferably behind an earth wall in cover, such as at the edge of a wood. Once targets had been engaged and there were no more targets available, the commander was instructed to direct the driver to change to a different location by reversing out of their current position to avoid being hit by enemy artillery. Jagdpanzer 38s were issued to combat units from early July 1944 onwards.

The majority of the Jagdpanzer 38s saw service on the eastern front with the Heeres Panzerjäger Abteilungen (Army Tank Hunter Battalions) 561, 731, 741, 743 and 744, but some companies were diverted to the Arnhem sector in Holland to help stop the Allied Operation Market Garden attack in September 1944. In December 1944 and January 1945, 295 Jagdpanzer 38s were deployed in the winter Ardennes offensive, the Battle of the Bulge.

An American infantryman of the 29th Infantry Division, carrying a bazooka anti-tank rocket launcher, runs past a knocked out burning Jagdpanzer 38 during the Siegfried Line Campaign on 4 December 1944 at Aldenhoven in the North Rhine-Westphalia region of Germany

***Above:** German infantry advances in a Silesian village supported by a Jagdpanzer 38. The soldier pictured right is the 2nd gunner of a machine-gun team, who carries on his back ammunition and additional barrels for the gun.*

© Getty

"SOME COMPANIES WERE DIVERTED TO THE ARNHEM SECTOR IN HOLLAND TO HELP STOP THE ALLIED OPERATION MARKET GARDEN ATTACK IN SEPTEMBER 1944"

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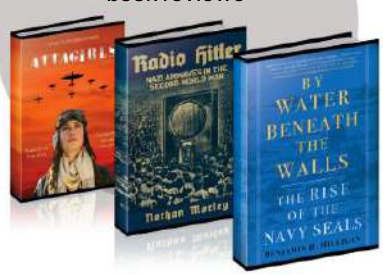


PATHFINDERS: BOMBING REVOLUTIONARIES

Bestselling author Will Iredale reveals how RAF Bomber Command combined courage and innovative technology to greatly increase its bombing accuracy over occupied Europe

Will Iredale's journalistic work includes working on both the foreign and home news desks of The Sunday Times

At the height of WWII, a crack team of men and women in RAF Bomber Command transformed the aerial bombing campaign against Nazi Germany. Known as the Pathfinders, these innovative air personnel saved Bomber Command from disintegration and turned it into a formidable force that razed German cities with devastating accuracy. Using the latest technologies, the Pathfinders rattled senior Nazi commanders and helped pave the way for Allied victory in Western Europe.

This remarkable story is the subject of Will Iredale's new book *The Pathfinders*. The bestselling author of *The Kamikaze Hunters*, Iredale uncovers the Pathfinders' origins, multinational personnel and even their impact on D-Day.

Why was the initial Pathfinder Force founded in 1942?

By 1941 it was clear Bomber Command could not accurately find or bomb targets over Nazi-occupied Europe at night. Winston Churchill's scientific adviser Professor Lindemann decided to investigate why. Over 650 photographs taken by night bombers were examined and the results were dynamite. Just one in five RAF bombers sent on operations to Germany and France got within 8km of their target. On moonless nights this proportion fell to one in fifteen. Something needed to be done, and fast. The response was the Pathfinders – a secret air force of 20,000 young men and women. They took Bomber Command from the brink of extinction in 1942 and transformed it into a weapon capable of razing whole cities to the ground in a single night or hitting targets just a few hundred feet wide.

What techniques and technologies did the Pathfinders use?

Pathfinder aircraft flew ahead of the main force of bombers, locating the target before dropping flares so the rest of the bomber stream following behind knew where to aim. Central to their success was pioneering technology created by a team of British boffins. The most accurate was a device called 'Oboe', which used radio pulses to help guide aircraft to the target. However, Oboe only had a range of around 435km, so the Pathfinders also used 'H2S' – an airborne radar which scanned the ground. The returning echoes created a shadowy map of the terrain that appeared on a cathode-ray tube housed in a set in the fuselage. This meant a navigator could theoretically identify his aircraft's location. Pathfinders then dropped 'target indicators' – brightly coloured flares made with the help of the British fireworks industry. A contract with one fireworks company alone was worth over £600,000 – the equivalent to £28 million today.

How successful were the Pathfinders?

After a slow start, the Pathfinders soon made an impact. In the months prior to their first real examination in the Battle of the Ruhr in 1943, one in ten aircraft sent by Bomber Command

Don Bennett (centre) commanded the Pathfinders during 1942-45. He is pictured with his key staff in the operations room of the Pathfinders' HQ in Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire

Images © WH Allen, Penguin

to the Ruhr got within 5km of their target. Led by the Pathfinders, this figure rose to 73 percent in the Ruhr campaign during the spring and summer of 1943. The cost was bloody – at least 774 Pathfinder airmen lost their lives between March and July 1943. However, some of the most important targets, which had been attacked many times in the past with little effect, were now being located and pounded with ruthless efficiency. By 1945, 95 percent of the aircraft despatched by Bomber Command on German cities bombed within 5km of the aiming point.

What were the demographics of those who served in this unit?

Like the rest of Bomber Command, the Pathfinders were an eclectic mix in background and origin. Coal miners rubbed shoulders with school teachers, accountants with farm labourers. More than half of the airmen came from Commonwealth countries, including Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Canada. Others hailed from America, Norway, and Hong Kong. However, what often marked them out from the main force was their experience. Many had served one or even two tours – united in spirit by a 'press on' attitude – before being picked for the elite role. While their losses were actually fractionally below main force crews, the most experienced Pathfinders became master bombers. They monitored the whole operation from above and instructed other crews where to aim their bombs. To be a master bomber was one of the most dangerous aerial combat jobs of WWII.

What was it like to interview surviving veterans for your book?

It's always special to speak to someone who was directly involved with something as historically significant as Britain's bombing war over Nazi-occupied Europe. What makes this even more precious is that all these veterans are now in their mid-90s or older. For some, this is the first time they have spoken in detail about their experience. For all, it will most probably be the last.

However, this shouldn't mean first-hand accounts are taken as read. As the decades pass time can fray the sharp edges of memory, and it's always important to bear that in mind. That's why I was keen to also dig into archives for letters and diaries written at the time. Sometimes a contemporaneous account from a teenager or person in their early 20s can take on a very different texture to recollections from a veteran years later.

To what extent did the Pathfinders' efforts determine the course of the war for the Western Allies?

While Arthur Harris's dream of wrecking Berlin was always beyond his reach, his ability to wield a vast bomber force to crush towns and cities closer to Britain became almost routine. Through better navigation and target marking, hundreds more planes were squeezed into bomber streams, passing over a target in less time, overwhelming defences, reducing bomber losses and wreaking havoc. This success was as much about the efficiency of the bombing as the accuracy of the bombs. The number of tons of bombs dropped over the target per square mile increased five-fold between 1943-44. This forced Hitler to move equipment and manpower away from the fighting fronts to tackle the bombing threat.

"LIKE THE REST OF BOMBER COMMAND, THE PATHFINDERS WERE AN ECLECTIC MIX IN BACKGROUND AND ORIGIN"

The bombing of Dresden photographed by a Pathfinder aircraft on the night of 13-14 February 1945

The efforts of the Pathfinders certainly bore fruit for the D-Day landings. Its aircraft played a vital role smashing the coastal batteries behind the landing beaches hours before troops stormed ashore. While they never completely conquered the elements to deliver foolproof accuracy for Bomber Command, the transformation in its bombing capabilities was remarkable. There was no one means of winning the war, but the Pathfinders' contribution to the air offensive ensured that Bomber Command – alongside the American air force – played a significant role in the eventual Allied victory.

King George VI, Queen Elizabeth and Princess Elizabeth inspect aircrews of 83 Squadron at Pathfinder air station RAF Wyton, May 1943

The Pathfinders: The Elite RAF Force that Turned the Tide of WWII is published by WH Allen, Penguin Books. To purchase a copy visit: **www.penguin.co.uk**

MUSEUMS & EVENTS

Discover the history of Caribbean soldiers at the National Army Museum, Scotland's role during the Cold War and Norwich's mighty castle

Scotland's Cold War

National Museums Scotland is launching an ambitious exhibition to highlight the Scottish contribution to the decades-long nuclear standoff between East and West

National Museums Scotland (NMS) is one of the leading museum groups in the UK and Europe and looks after collections of national and international importance. Some of its individual museums include the National Museum of Scotland, National Museum of Flight and the National War Museum. The NMS has recently been awarded a grant by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) with the University of Stirling to conduct a £1 million research project exploring how the Cold War features in British and European museums. This is the largest grant ever awarded to the NMS and the three-year project, entitled Materialising The Cold War, will culminate in a major exhibition about Scotland's Cold War.

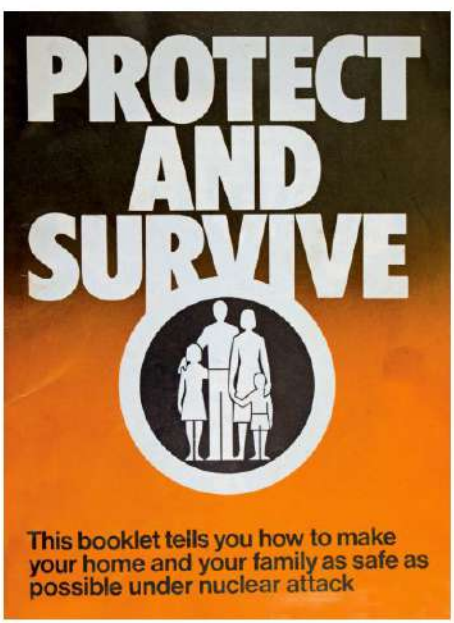
Three decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall, in a climate of international tension, the Cold War is more relevant than ever. Despite its significance, it is a difficult story to tell in museums because it didn't escalate to the point of direct confrontation. Materialising The Cold War aims to change that by analysing museum collections and displays across the UK and Europe. This will cover everything from military and social history to technology, art and design with the aim of understanding the Cold War in a specific national context.

The exhibition will be accompanied by schools programming, publications and activity to support the museum sector in engaging new audiences with this period of history. In addition to weapons technology, the project will examine peace and protest material, civil defence collections and Cold War culture. This will collectively explore the material legacies of the relationship between society, technology and the military.

Dr Chris Breward, Director of the NMS, says: "The Cold War casts a significant shadow over the second half of the 20th century, yet the intangible nature of this period of geopolitical tension makes it difficult to convey in museums. This generous grant from the AHRC will allow us to work with partners across the UK and Europe to conduct in-depth research into the representation of the Cold War in museum collections. Among a number of exciting outputs will be the first exhibition to tell the full story of Scotland's place in this extraordinary conflict."

Professor Judith Phillips, Deputy Principal for Research at the University of Stirling, adds: "This is a significant grant and as such recognises the leading expertise of our academics in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. It marks the start of an important partnership and will explore a fascinating time in world history which has helped shaped lives today."

Materialising The Cold War will begin on 1 October 2021. For more information visit: www.nms.ac.uk/coldwar


PROTECT AND SURVIVE
This booklet tells you how to make your home and your family as safe as possible under nuclear attack

Left: A British Home Office pamphlet issued in May 1980 urging families to protect themselves in the event of a nuclear attack

Above: A badge produced for the Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

Above: An English Electric Lightning (the RAF's first supersonic jet fighter) on display at the National Museum of Flight

Images: National Museums Scotland

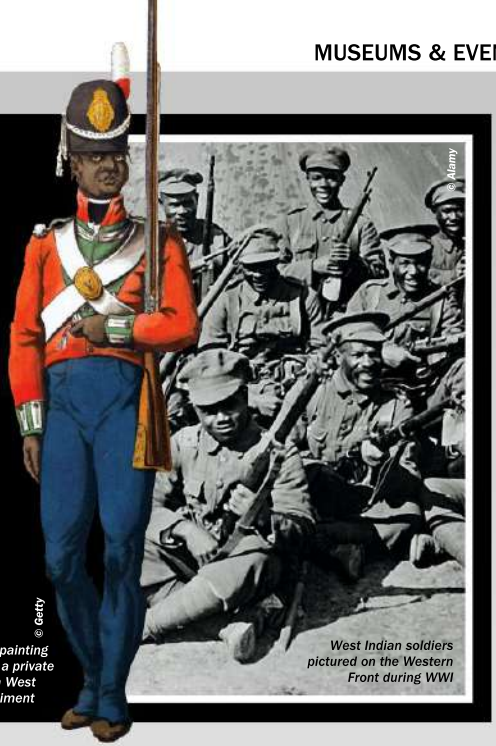
Soldiers of the Caribbean

The National Army Museum in London is commemorating the role of West Indian servicemen and women in the British Army with a new exhibition

Delivered in partnership with the West India Committee and supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the West Indian Soldier exhibition at the National Army Museum (NAM) highlights the little-known military heritage shared between Britain and the Caribbean. Encompassing more than 300 years of history, it tells the story of the role of West Indian servicemen and women in the British Army. The exhibition also examines the experiences of British soldiers and officers in the Caribbean and their combined service in various military campaigns.

Visitors can learn about key moments in the history of the West India Regiments, including the nature of their recruitment and service and the unique position that these soldiers occupy in both the UK and Caribbean. West Indian military service has a long tradition dating back to the colonial era but also the World Wars, as well as continuing deployments across the world today. Exhibition highlights include the Victoria Cross of Lieutenant Frank de Pass, the colours of the 4th West India Regiment, the war diary of the British West Indies Regiment and a rare portrait of a private soldier of the 8th West India Regiment that was painted in 1804.

Entry to West Indian Soldier is free but the NAM is asking visitors to book a time slot online before visiting the museum. The exhibition runs until 31 October 2021. For more information visit: www.nam.ac.uk



© Getty

An 1812 painting depicting a private of the 5th West India Regiment

© Alamy

West Indian soldiers pictured on the Western Front during WWI

The Keep of Norwich

Norwich Castle is a remarkable Norman fortress and is now a thriving museum with galleries on various aspects of Norfolk's military history

Founded by William the Conqueror sometime during 1066-75, Norwich Castle was initially a motte and bailey fortification, with its stone keep constructed during 1095-1110. This impressive structure still stands today and has witnessed many events in the city's history, including the castle's capture during the revolt of 1173-74 and its role as a county jail for 500 years. A museum since 1894, Norwich Castle now contains outstanding galleries of archaeology, regimental history, natural history and a variety of fine, decorative and contemporary art.

Two galleries of note for military history enthusiasts are 'Boudica and the Romans' and another commemorating the Royal Norfolk Regiment. The former explores the story of the Iceni queen's bloody revolt against Roman rule and contains reconstructions and the famous Snettisham Treasure hoard of Iron Age gold and silver. The gallery also contains the Worthing Helmet – an exceptionally rare Roman bronze cavalry helmet.

The galleries commemorating the Royal Norfolk Regiment have a rich and varied collection that illustrates the county's 300-year regimental history. Displayed artefacts include a portable altar used on the Western Front during WWI and even spices that Crimean War soldiers used to make their rations more exciting. Visitors can explore all aspects of the regiment's history, from its colonial-era service and the World Wars to post-war conflicts in Korea and Cyprus.

Norwich Castle's iconic keep is one of the few surviving intact Norman fortified structures in England and is currently undergoing lottery-funded restoration work

© Getty

For more information visit: www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/norwich-castle

WWII THIS MONTH...

AUGUST 1941

To commemorate 80 years since the Second World War, **History of War** will be taking a look at some of the key events taking place during each month of the conflict

LEGLESS IN ST OMER

On 9 August, Douglas Bader, one of the most famous aces of the RAF, bailed out while on a sortie over Northern France after his Spitfire was hit. There has been controversy over the identity of the aircraft that shot down Bader's plane, with some suggestions it may have been a friendly fire incident. Landing in St Omer via parachute, Bader was quickly picked up by German authorities and taken prisoner. A double amputee, he lost one of his prosthetic legs while exiting his Spitfire, and German authorities arranged for a new leg to be delivered, as detailed in this telegram: "Wing commander Douglas Bader has been imprisoned following a parachute jump. Lost artificial limb of right leg. Sending new artificial limb via parachute from German side day and time to be determined via radio."

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HQ FC I TEL
NEW INTEL
TO HQ FC INTELLIGENCE
FROM 13 GROUP INTELLIGENCE
914/41

REF. OUR SIGNAL 913/41 PLEASE SUBSTITUTE THE FOLLOWING:-

MESSAGE PICKED UP BY W.T. AT 13 GROUP ON 500 K.C.

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SHEILA ON THE MARCH

Derived from the earlier Women's Australian National Service, the Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS) was raised on 13 August, with the aim of freeing up more men to serve in frontline roles – a similar model to the British Auxiliary Territorial Service. For the duration of the war, women filled logistical and support jobs such as drivers and radio operators, as well as more dangerous roles manning fixed defence units. At its height the AWAS numbered over 20,000.

© Alamy

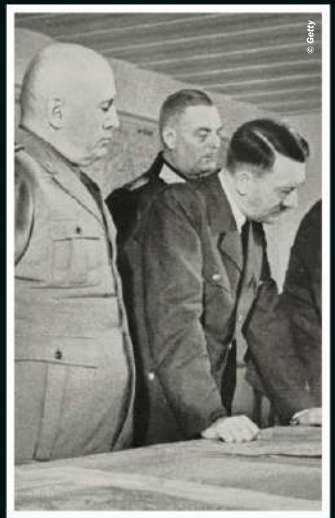
BRITAIN STANDS ALONE?

Churchill pictured alone on deck, en route to his meeting with President Roosevelt in Placentia Bay, Newfoundland. The Atlantic Conference, as it became known, was followed by a joint declaration of unity between the US and the UK, released on 14 August. Churchill travelled to Newfoundland on HMS Prince of Wales, while President Roosevelt was visiting the region ostensibly for a fishing trip – the details of the conference were not made public until afterwards.

© Getty

IL DUCE IN THE WOLF'S LAIR

Hitler and Mussolini are briefed in the Wolf's Lair headquarters. Located near Gierłoz, Poland, the Wolf's Lair served as the Führer's base on the Eastern Front. Mussolini spent four days with Hitler, during which they also visited the frontline, where the invasion of the Soviet Union was still progressing. Three years later the headquarters would be the scene of the 20 July assassination attempt on Hitler, coinciding with another visit by Mussolini, who arrived in the aftermath of the bomb detonation.



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REVIEWS

Our pick of the latest military history books and films

ATTAGIRLS

"IT'S ABOUT ABILITY, NOT WHETHER ONE IS A MAN OR A WOMAN; IT'S THE MOST COMPETENT PERSON FOR THE JOB"

Author: Paul Olavesen-Stabb
Publisher: Aetheris Publishing **Price:** £20

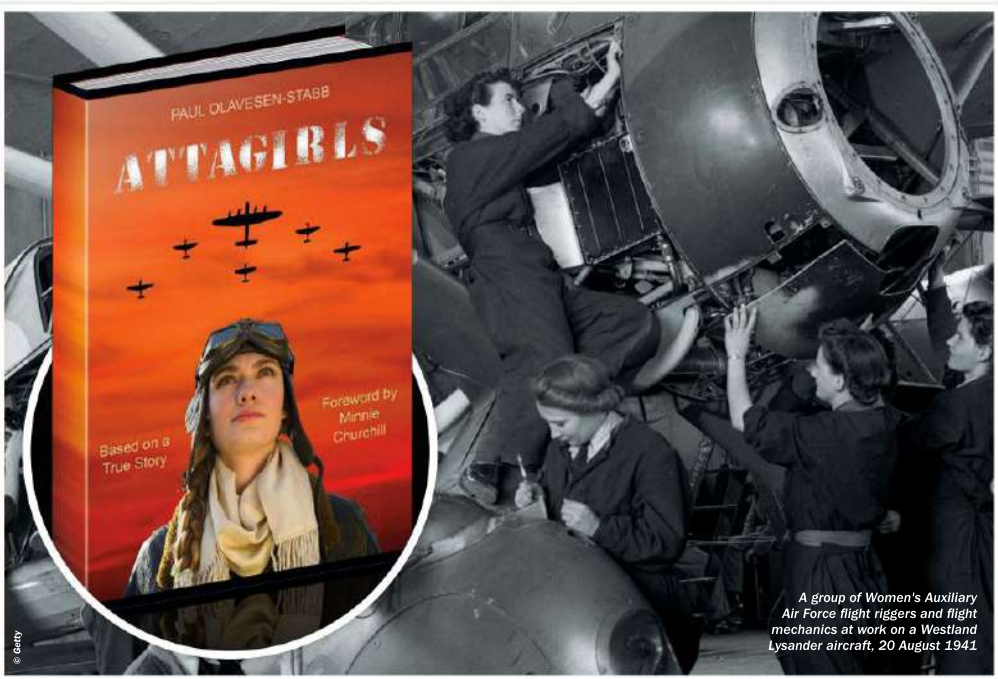
The above quotation summarises *ATTAGirls* perfectly. The story is about women in WWII but is also about equality. Yes, there is resentment, shock and disbelief at women having an active role in the war effort as part of the Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA), but the book isn't structured around that. Paul Olavesen-Stabb's writing transports us back to 1940s Britain and brings the women's war story to prominence with the camaraderie as shown in *Band of Brothers* and the emotion displayed in *Testament of Youth*.

The RAF's Spitfires, Hurricanes and Lancasters are emblematic of the Second World War. Popular memory transports us to stories of the Battle of Britain and dog fights over the country, but never do we think of women as the pilots of these iconic planes. Olavesen-Stabb opens by eloquently setting the scene in early 1940s East Anglia, where we meet the protagonist Molly. The power of his writing is what makes Molly's story captivating: *ATTAGirls* isn't written in a traditional academic historical style – it reads more like fiction, igniting every element of the imagination.

Every step of Molly's journey into the ATA is covered in depth, from understanding her love for flying, her interview to join up, uniform, training and her flourishing as a pilot. This will be a new topic for many readers, but Molly's journey and that of her fellow female pilots is brought vividly to life. Even in this modern day, you empathise with the girls as they face the struggles of being a woman in a male-dominated world, yet this doesn't stop them. If anything, it empowers them.

Of course, there is drama – it's war, after all! That is the strength of Olavesen-Stabb's writing: the dramatic events catch you off guard and found us gasping, cheering and crying. What we enjoyed was the story not being structured by years or dates, Olavesen-Stabb instead threads in touchpoints to give context to the events.

In essence, this is a book about being (to quote the ATA girls) "eager for the air". It's about relationships – with family and lovers, friends old and new, and life-changing experiences that we can relate to today. Olavesen-Stabb has done an excellent job in revealing the story of the ATA's female pilots. It's a compelling story that has faded from popular memory, but through this book we hope they gain the recognition they deserve for their skill and bravery during the Second World War. **OS**



A group of Women's Auxiliary Air Force flight riggers and flight mechanics at work on a Westland Lysander aircraft, 20 August 1941

SIX MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT

THE FOUNDATIONS FOR A STRANGER-THAN-FICTION THRILLER ARE FRUSTRATINGLY UNDERMINED IN THIS WWII SPY DRAMA

Studio: Mad As Birds **Director:** Andy Goddard
Released: Out now

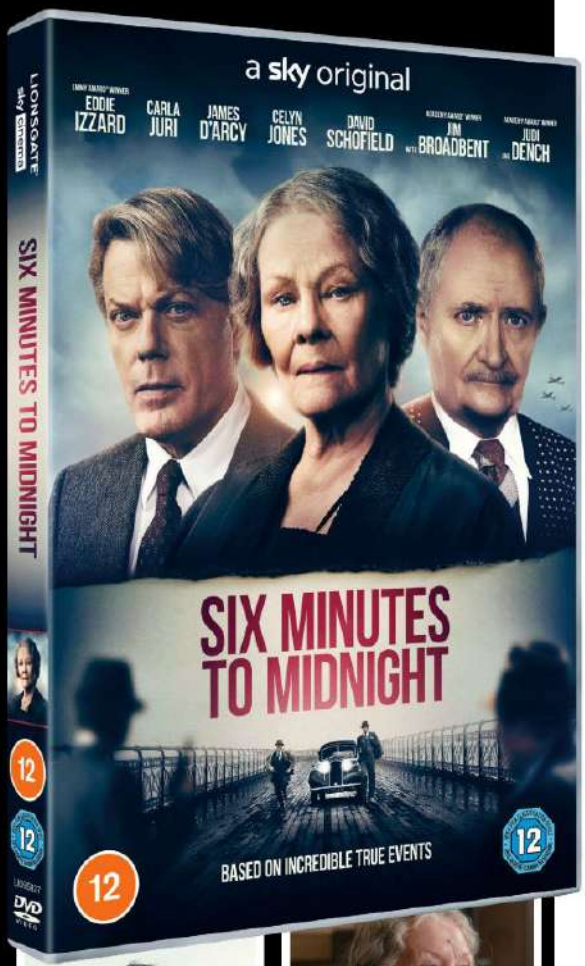
An English school teeming with the daughters of Nazi high command and run by fiercely pro-German teachers with WWII looming ever closer sounds like the plot of an outlandish thriller. In fact, Augusta Victoria College (located in Bexhill-on-Sea on the East Sussex coast) did indeed act as a type of finishing school for the children of some of Hitler's most prominent cronies between 1932 and 1939. Sporting swastikas on their uniforms and attending classes led by adherents of the Nazis' racist ideology, these girls occupied a world of right-arm salutes and fantastical propaganda. All of which would encourage a viewer to assume that *Six Minutes To Midnight* (a title that refers to agent Thomas Miller's secret government phone number: Whitehall 1154) will make for a tense, captivating watch. Unfortunately, such hopes turn out to be as realistic as Hitler's dreams of invading Britain in 1940.

Eddie Izzard's comedic prowess is beyond question, but ironically for a spy film his screenwriting debut doesn't withstand much probing. Alongside Judi Dench (who plays the school's pro-Nazi headmistress, Miss Rocholl) and Jim Broadbent (relegated to the role of a cheerful bus driver), Izzard seems subdued in his role as Thomas Miller, a deliberate and totally appropriate lack of comedy denuding him of his usual zest. Dench (surprisingly) is equally lacklustre, while Broadbent's many talents are wasted. Given that agent Miller, employed as a teacher, is tasked with not only uncovering the truth about the murder of his predecessor but then happens to stumble across a Nazi plot that could cost Britain a vital advantage in the coming war, the misuse of stars of this calibre is unforgivable.

As for the daughters and goddaughters of the Nazi leadership, they too feel largely overlooked, a bizarre approach given their apparent importance to the story. This serves the two unintended purposes of diminishing the sense of drama that Izzard was no doubt aiming for and preventing the viewer from drawing their own conclusions about the girls' intentions. Are they innocent pawns in a lethal game of chess, or are they anti-British Nazi zealots all too aware of what is at stake? Neither Izzard nor the audience will ever know.

Over the course of 90 minutes a cast that initially promises so much find themselves trapped in a spluttering pseudo-spy film interspersed with moments of real menace, undone by dialogue that is often unwieldy. Even the sinister Miss Keller (Carla Juri), a swimming champion who narrowly missed out on the 1936 Berlin Olympics and now teaches PE and German at the school, can't elevate this story above a middling WWII yarn that would almost certainly have worked better as a period drama on the BBC.

Six Minutes To Midnight's one saving grace is the beautiful manner in which it was shot, with the audience treated to plenty of glimpses of the stunning Welsh countryside (the film was not actually shot in East Sussex) as Miller athletically flees various pursuers intent on bumping him off. One can only hope that Izzard is racing back into the warm and familiar embrace of comedy. **CG**



ALL ABOUT HISTORY RECOMMENDS

STATE FUNERAL

STALIN'S FUNERAL CLEVERLY RECONTEXTUALISED AS AN ABSURD AFFRONT TO HUMAN SUFFERING

Certificate: PG **Director:** Sergei Loznitsa **Cast:** Joseph Stalin, Lavrenti Beria, Nikita Khrushchev

Envisioned as a propaganda feature, 40 hours' worth of black-and-white and colour footage was captured by Soviet cameramen across the USSR, along with audio recordings of wireless broadcasts and hagiographic eulogies running 24 hours in total. An army of cinematographers photographed crowds as they gathered to hear radio addresses announcing Joseph Stalin's death, in early March 1953, as well as the days preceding the main event, held in Red Square, where thousands upon thousands of party members and the public paid their respects to the dictator, who was lying in state. The proposed film was first put on hold, and then mothballed, after a power struggle emerged among Stalin's cronies, followed by Uncle Joe's regime being officially denounced by Nikita Khrushchev.

Packed away in the Russian State Documentary Film and Photo Archive for over 60 years, a lot of *State Funeral* (2019) is new to the world, certainly new to a general audience. Director Sergei Loznitsa has recontextualised this treasure trove of cobwebbed materials, making for an astonishing but gruelling two hours and 15 minutes. Make no bones about it, Loznitsa's opus is not a traditional documentary at all, more an experimental work allowing the carefully selected and assembled images to do all the heavy lifting, resulting in a sense of chilling objectivity.

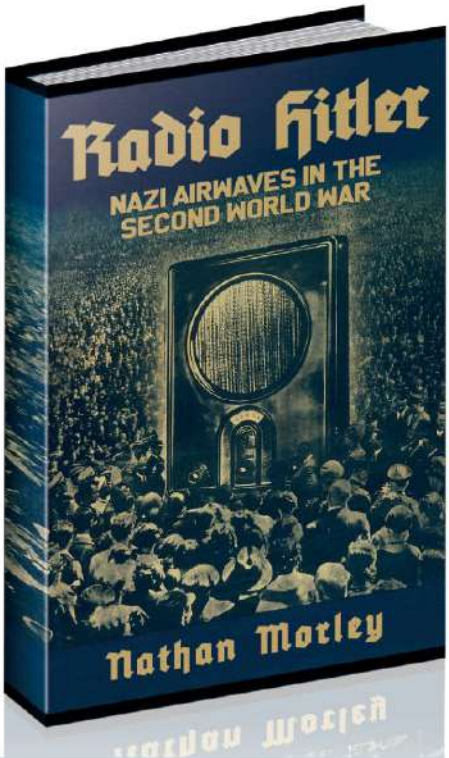
In Loznitsa's inspired hands, there is plenty of scope for unexpected deadpan humour. The sheer monotony of watching people shuffle past Stalin's tiny casket amid mountains of floral tributes develops into something approaching absurdist comedy as much as a patience-testing exercise. Then there's the dirge-like, overbearing classical compositions further policing the solemn mood and speakers repeating the same matter-of-fact lines over and over. What unfolds is a ghoulish and ironic spectacle of epic proportions. The unseen eulogists or the higher-ups deliver speeches at the memorial on camera, all of them drumming into everybody how Stalin was great, Stalin was our pal, Stalin was the best thing since sliced bread, move over Jesus Christ. There is a religious fervour on display in the staging of what looks like the biggest send-off of all time, aptly demonstrating the funeral and the outpouring of grief, whether genuine or crocodile tears for the benefit of the camera, was the true zenith and demented culmination of Stalin's cult of personality.

Viewed today, the excessive pomp and pageantry of Stalin's funeral, held on a dreary winter's day, is truly disturbing in its scope, an affront to humanity. All this for a monster who caused death and suffering to literally millions of his countrymen and perceived enemies. Our knowledge of Stalin's crimes against humanity means *State Funeral* is rendered inherently satirical by virtue of time passing and history having revealed a long-suppressed truth.

In discarding the trappings of a standard documentary format – the voiceover narration, talking heads, onscreen texts establishing certain facts – we are invited to witness proceedings as was back then, the camera placing us right there in the room, like we're time travellers or party delegates. Therein lies *State Funeral*'s aesthetic and nightmarish brilliance. **MC**

Images: MUBI

RADIO HITLER



A VAST NAZI 'FAKE NEWS' ENTERPRISE THAT BOMBARDED AUDIENCES IN THE US, BRITAIN, THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

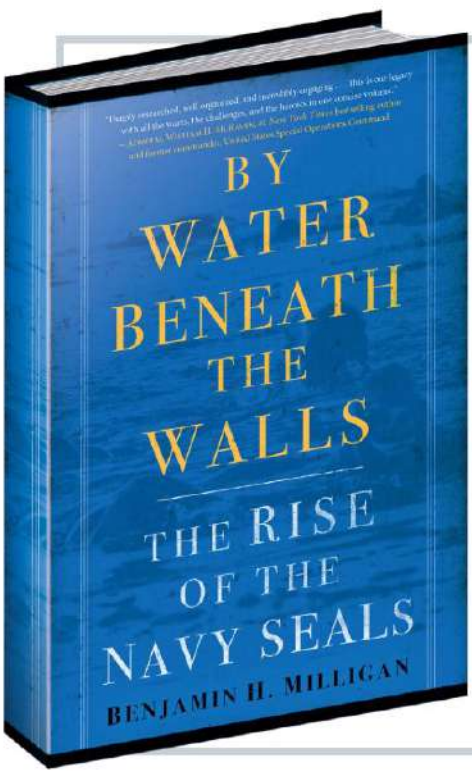
Author: Nathan Morley **Publisher:** Amberley **Price:** £20

The story of broadcasting in the years of National Socialism constitutes a fascinating political and social chronicle of wartime Germany's propaganda machine. As Hitler's armies swept over Europe, the Foreign Directorate decided to develop a radio network to broadcast Nazi disinformation. Nathan Morley reveals the little-known story of how, in 1941, Die Deutschen Europasender (DES) was introduced, in part to counter the BBC, which at the time was spreading the Allies' side of the story to Germany and beyond on the airwaves.

The powerful DES was eventually operating in 130 longwave to shortwave stations and transmitters. For Hitler, it represented the fulfilment of the twisted dream set out 16 years previously in *Mein Kampf*. In his book, the future Führer explicitly stressed the importance of radio as an essential tool in the fight for Nazi supremacy in Europe.

At its peak, the Reich's communications empire employed more than 20,000 people working on stations, including clandestine networks that broadcast subversive material, a forerunner of today's 'fake news'. It became a war of words on multiple fronts, which DES director Kurt Vaessen described as a task "to mirror the political, military, cultural and social work of Germany".

One of the book's most intriguing episodes deals with William Joyce, the notorious 'Lord Haw-Haw', who began working for the Nazi regime a week before the outbreak of war. The author offers a meticulously researched insight into Joyce's career, from lieutenant in Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists to head commentator of German propaganda from Berlin and his final defiance at Wandsworth Prison, where he was hanged by the celebrated executioner Albert Pierrepoint. **JS**



BY WATER BENEATH THE WALLS

THE ORIGINS OF THE US NAVY SEALS ARE AS MYSTERIOUS AND CONTROVERSIAL AS THE UNIT ITSELF – THIS BOOK FINALLY SHINES A LIGHT ON ITS TURBULENT BEGINNINGS

Author: Benjamin H Milligan **Publisher:** Bantam Dell **Price:** £24

When one thinks of the US Navy SEALs, images of the special operations force that killed Osama bin Laden immediately spring to mind. Today they are a revered elite of the military world, performing daring operations in the most challenging environments and under the most difficult of circumstances. But just exactly how did a small unit of the US Navy come to such prominence and operate in areas often far away from the sea?

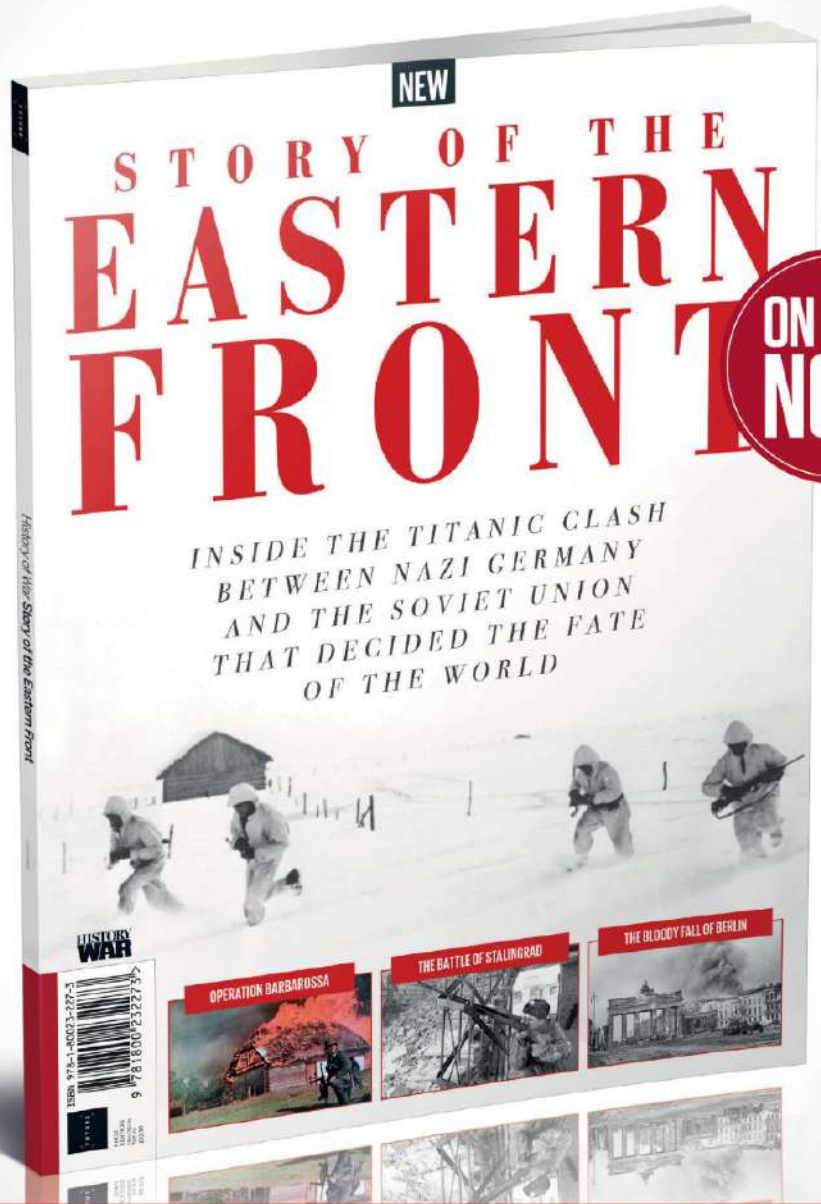
As Milligan argues, the beginning of the Navy's 'inland creep', or 'landgrabs', was the result of the failure of sister services to permanently establish, initially at least, their own commando units. These include the disbandment of units such as the Marine Raiders or the Army Rangers after or even during World War II, stripping the navy of its commando partners – voids that forward-thinking naval officers sought to fill.

The book expertly charts the turbulent evolution of the SEALs from their forefathers in World War II and the Korean War to their official birth in the early 1960s and beyond. Milligan not only considers the operational history but also issues such as how inter-service rivalries and their unintended consequences helped shaped the service.

Milligan took seven years to produce this book and it shows. It's extremely well-researched and engagingly written with much passion, in no small part due to the author's own SEAL service. A delight to read, *By Water Beneath The Walls* fills a glaring gap in the current literature of early US Navy SEALs history. **MS**

UNCOVER THE HORRORS OF THE BLOODIEST THEATRE IN THE HISTORY OF WARFARE

The battle for supremacy on the Eastern Front of WWII was arguably the most brutal conflict in human history, an existential struggle without mercy. From Stalingrad to Berlin, this is the story of a fight that would reshape the world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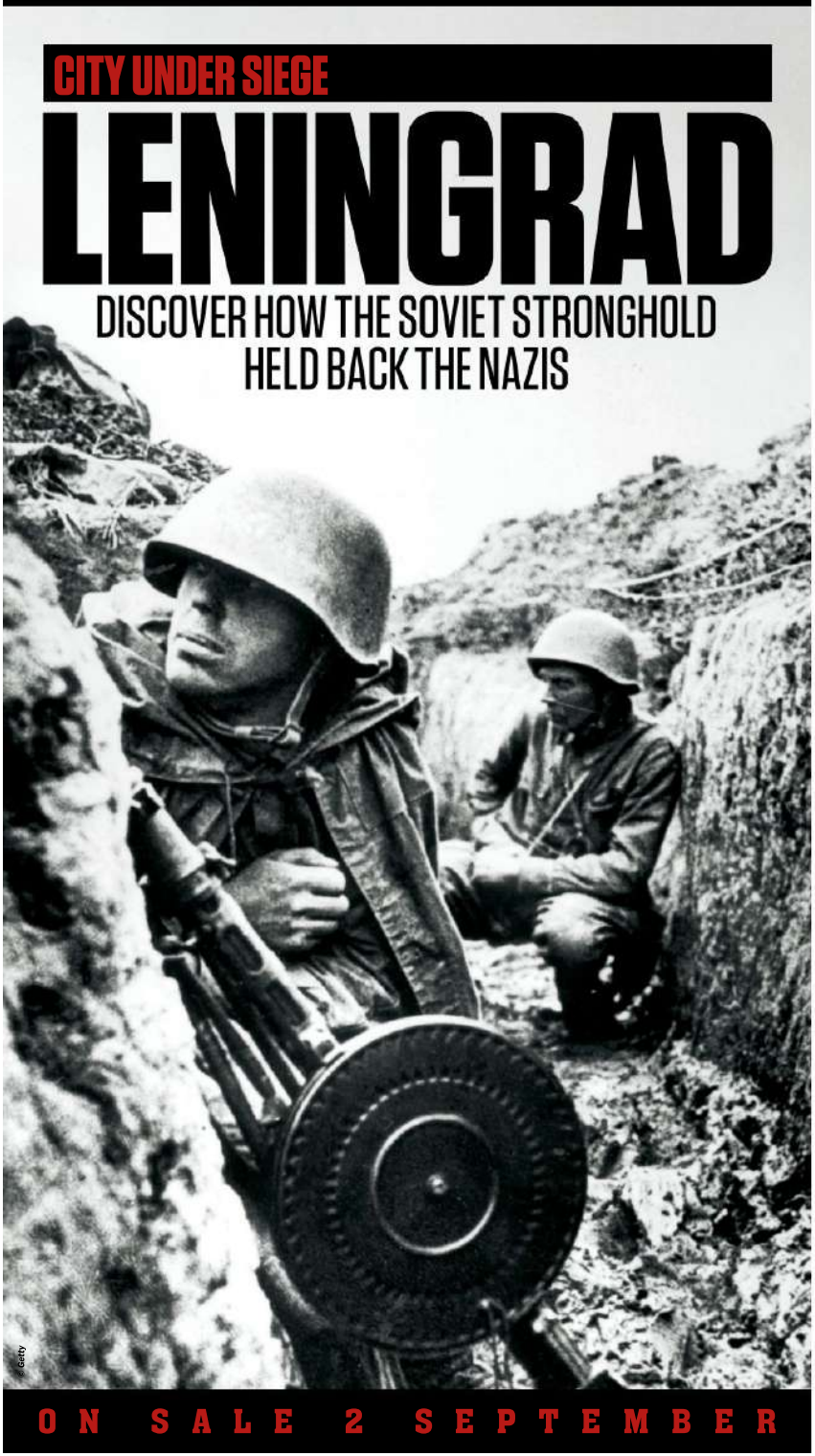

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WWII TANK DOLL

Little Audrey was the lucky mascot of a British Cromwell tank commander who took her on campaign from Normandy to Berlin

In 1944, British junior officer Lionel 'Bill' Bellamy was given a small china doll by his then-girlfriend Audrey before he set out for Normandy. A member of 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars, Bellamy had joined the Royal Armoured Corps in 1941 and crossed the English Channel with his unit after D-Day. Nicknamed Little Audrey, the delicate doll is just 13cm tall and wears a bouffant dress while clutching a wide-brimmed hat.

Bellamy attached the doll to the searchlight on the turret of his Cromwell tank and she became a good-luck charm for the crew, who apparently accepted her "without question". Despite the fierce fighting in Normandy and beyond, Little Audrey remained unscathed by enemy fire – until the tank was attacked in the Netherlands.

On that occasion, Little Audrey was knocked from her position by a branch as the tank passed through a hedgerow. She was so loved that the troop of three tanks stopped while a troop leader from another tank jumped out to retrieve her, at great risk. Bellamy later wrote: "As I was about to give the signal to move, I saw Sergeant Bill Pritchard leap out of his tank. He rushed back to the hedgerow, picked up Audrey, clambered on the back of my tank, handed her to me and shouted, 'I'm not going without her!' I knew that she had become a very much-loved mascot, but until that moment I hadn't realised the full extent of her role!"

The cherished doll continued to accompany Bellamy for the rest of the war, including when he reached Berlin and wandered around the Reichstag. His acclaimed war memoir *Troop Leader: A Tank Commander's Story* was published in 2005 and he kept Little Audrey until he died in 2009.

Bill Bellamy was awarded the Military Cross by Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery in March 1945. He retired from the British Army in 1955 with the rank of captain

Little Audrey survived everything that German forces threw at Bellamy's tank, including mines and machine gun, mortar and artillery fire

Images: Tank Museum

Little Audrey is on display as part of the new WWII: War Stories exhibition at the Tank Museum in Bovington, Dorset. For more information on how to book tickets visit:

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In the early days of the Vietnam war in the 1960s a fierce conflict raged in the skies over North Vietnam in South East Asia. United States Navy Douglas A4 Skyhawk fighter bombers launched daring low-level attacks against enemy installations and positions being used by both the North Vietnamese army, and the imbedded and frustratingly agile Vietcong insurgency. Armed with cannons, bombs and unguided missiles the little A4 Skyhawks would skim across the rice paddies and hug the densely forested mountains of Vietnam. Against them ranged small arms fire, artillery, guided surface to air missiles and MiG's of the North Vietnamese Air Force. Alongside the supersonic MiG-21 was the older subsonic MiG-17F. This aircraft, codenamed Fresco, was a very maneuverable opponent, and certainly a match for the Skyhawk. By the end of the war both the Skyhawk and the MiG-17F had been superseded by more complex aircraft, but in the early days they formed the backbone of the air war over Vietnam.

DOUGLAS™ A-4B SKYHAWK™
VA-93 'Blue Blazers', Det.Q, USS Bennington (CVS-20), Sea of Japan, 1964.
Length 178mm Width 116mm Pieces 75

MIKOYAN-GUREVICH MIG-17F 'FRESCO' (Shenyang J-5) 921st Air Regiment, Vietnam People's Air Force, mid-1960s.
Length 155mm Width 134mm Pieces 84

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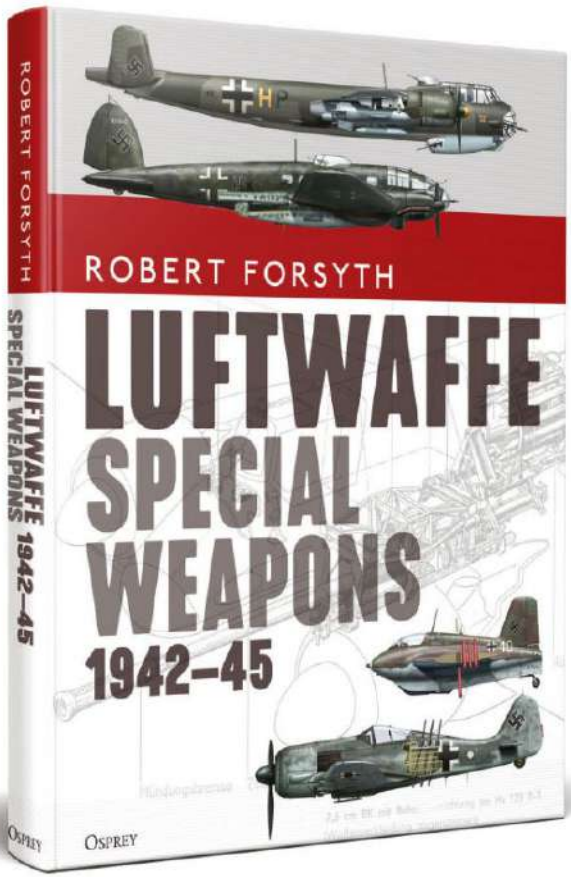
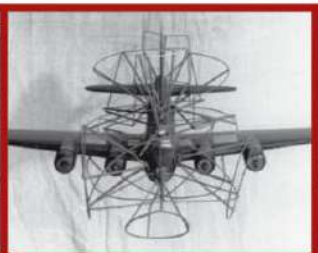


LUFTWAFFE SPECIAL WEAPONS 1942–45

In this highly illustrated book, Robert Forsyth examines the most innovative and unconventional weapons that comprised the Luftwaffe's increasingly potent arsenal developed to defend the Third Reich.



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